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WEEKEND
EDITION



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1 Marine dead, 5 missing after collision

By SETH ROBSON AND HANA KUSUMOTO
Stars and Stripes

A Marine Corps fighter jet and a tanker plane conducting a midair refueling mission collided Thursday off the coast of Japan, leaving one Marine dead and five missing, U.S. and Japanese officials said.

Another Marine who was rescued from the crash was reported to be in fair condition, officials said.

Fighter jet, tanker crash off coast of Japan

The refueling operation, which took place at about 2 a.m., was part of regularly scheduled training that involved an F/A-18 Hornet and a KC-130 Hercules aerial tanker that took off from Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, according to a statement from the Marines.

After the aircraft collided, they crashed into the Pacific Ocean about 200 miles south of Muroto Cape on Shikoku, the smallest of Japan's main islands, according to Japan's Defense Ministry. Five Marines were aboard the Hercules and two were on the Hornet.

The first rescued crewmember, who reportedly came from the Hornet, was picked up by a Japan Self-Defense Force helicopter at 5:43 a.m., the ministry said.

The Marine was being evaluated at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, according to a Marines statement issued just before 9 a.m. Thursday.

SEE COLLISION ON PAGE 3



Senior Airman Michael Hall tests liquid oxygen produced in October at the cryogenics laboratory at Kadena Air Base, Japan.

Carlos Vazquez/Stars and Stripes

Saving lives and making ice cream

Kadena's cryogenics lab
critical to Pacific operations

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MILITARY

Vice chief reassures a grieving 5th Fleet

By JOSHUA KARSTEN
Stars and Stripes

MANAMA, Bahrain — The Navy's second-in-command, dispatched here on a mission to console sailors and reassure allies after the sudden death of the service's top officer in the region, said Thursday that troops are "on watch" even as they mourn.

The arrival of Vice Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Bill Moran, whose visit comes as the USS John C. Stennis Carrier Strike Group heads toward the Middle East, came less than a week after 5th Fleet commander Vice Adm. Scott Stearney was found dead in his home.

Moran, who met with command leadership and enlisted troops over two days, also met with Bahrain's King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa to deliver a message that the mission hasn't changed.

"When you're on watch and something happens to your ship or shipmate, people step up, they step in and the mission goes on," Moran told Stars and Stripes. "I feel very confident that they're ready for anything that comes their way."

Despite CBS News and USNI News reports that Stearney's death was an apparent suicide, Moran said that he could not confirm the cause of death until an investigation is complete.

Vice Adm. Jim Malloy, who is in Bahrain as a senior liaison officer supporting U.S. Naval Forces Central Command and 5th Fleet, will soon be nominated to lead the commands, service officials said. Malloy would await confirmation from Congress.

Stearney's death shocked the military community in Bahrain, who gathered on base Wednesday for a private memorial service.

The death also stunned the Navy's leadership.

"I got a phone call and a text from the CNO, and he asked me to call him immediately and I did. I got word from him," Moran said. "Like you would expect, I was crushed."

The "flag warroom is pretty small,



SAMANTHA P. MONTENEGRO/Courtesy of the U.S. Navy

Vice Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Bill Moran salutes as taps is played during a memorial service honoring Vice Adm. Scott Stearney on Naval Support Activity Bahrain on Wednesday. Stearney was found dead at his Bahrain home Saturday.

pretty tight," he said, referencing the community of admirals.

While Moran wouldn't comment on the circumstances surrounding Stearney's death, he did indicate concern about the workloads of Navy leaders.

In October, Moran issued a mandate that all flag officers take more time off to care for their physical and mental health, including calling for leaders to take 10 consecutive days off per year. It's expected to be a model for lower-ranking sailors.

"It's not an option, because most flag of-

ficers — and a lot of sailors follow the lead of those flag officers and their commanders — don't take enough time off," he said. Senators last year during hearings zeroed in on long work weeks — some up to 100 hours — and lack of sleep for sailors as factors in the separate collisions involving the destroyers USS John S. McCain and USS Fitzgerald, which left a combined 17 sailors dead.

Officers who don't follow the new leave policy will get a call from him directly and they'll have "a nice conversation," Moran

said. He's also reinstated a requirement that flag officers undergo full annual physicals, similar to those given to aviators.

After Stearney's death, the Navy's priorities were the admiral's family, the team in Bahrain and making sure the mission stayed on track, Moran said.

"He was in an incredibly important position out here as fleet commander in an area of the world where we're in contact with adversaries every day," Moran said.

The 5th Fleet area of operations spans from the Red Sea to parts of the Indian Ocean. It includes critical maritime chokepoints like the Strait of Hormuz, through which much of the world's oil is transported and which Iran has threatened to close.

In a sign that the mission is moving forward, the USS Stennis group is bound for the 5th Fleet area, marking the first carrier visit to the region in eight months.

"It's not a response to (Stearney's) death at all," Moran said. "It was previously scheduled."

Moran spoke during a promotion ceremony and opened the floor to address sailors' concerns. Operations, less predictable scheduling of carrier group deployments and capabilities in the region were hot topics, but the biggest and most immediate concern was for Stearney's family.

"We talked about how to deal with that, and that everybody grieves in their own way (and) that they needed to pull together as a team, to watch out for each other right now at this time," Moran said. "I was heartened by just how much I saw that [is] already going on."

Moran also said that Hamad expressed condolences and "reiterated the support that his government in this country has for the United States Navy here in Bahrain."

As he prepared to depart the country, Moran said his main message to service members was that the "entire Navy stands behind them in this period, and to reassure our wonderful partners and hosts here in Bahrain that we're here to stay."

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MILITARY

US flies Open Skies aircraft over Ukraine

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — The U.S. military conducted an “extraordinary” surveillance flight over Ukraine on Thursday in response to Russia’s recent attack on Ukrainian ships, the Pentagon said.

The flight, which was conducted under the Open Skies Treaty, was intended to demonstrate solidarity with Ukraine, the Defense Department said in a statement. It described the operation as extraordinary but didn’t explain what made it so.

Ukraine is one of 34 countries party to the treaty, which permits its signatories to conduct surveillance missions over

each other’s military and other sensitive facilities. Russia is also a signatory of the agreement.

“The timing of this flight is intended to reaffirm U.S. commitment to Ukraine and other partner nations,” the statement said.

The Pentagon did not say where in Ukraine the flights took place.

Russia annexed Ukraine’s Crimean Peninsula in 2014 and since then has backed separatists in the country’s east in their fight against government forces. In a major escalation, Russia late last month attacked three Ukrainian ships and seized the crews during a dispute near the strategic Kerch Strait in the Black Sea.

Kiev has declared martial law in parts of the country, putting its military forces on high alert in connection with concerns that Russia could carry out further acts of aggression.

For the U.S., sending in an unarmed surveillance aircraft under the Open Skies Treaty could be a way to demonstrate solidarity with Ukraine while avoiding escalating tensions with Russia.

The Pentagon said the clash was a “dangerous escalation in a pattern of increasingly provocative and threatening activity” by Russia.

“The United States seeks a better relationship with Russia, but this cannot

happen while its unlawful and destabilizing actions continue in Ukraine and elsewhere,” it said.

Ukraine has sought more support from the U.S.-led NATO alliance. Last week, Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko requested that allies send ships into the Sea of Azov, which is located between Ukraine and Russia.

So far, NATO has given no indication that it will take such a step. However, allies have increased their presence in the Black Sea in recent years in connection with concerns about Russia.

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Corroded propeller caused 2017 Miss. crash

By COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A corroded propeller blade that broke loose mid-flight and jump-started a string of events caused the horrific crash of a Marine Corps KC-130T into Mississippi farmland in July 2017, killing all 16 servicemembers aboard the doomed cargo plane, investigators determined.

The crash of the plane during a cross-country flight from Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point in North Carolina to Naval Air Facility El Centro in southern California could have been prevented had civilian Air Force technicians discovered the corrosion during the aircraft’s last major propeller inspection in 2011, the investigators wrote in a 73-page report. Their findings were made public Wednesday.

The technicians with the Air Force-run Warner Robins Air Logistics Command compound on Robins Air Force Base in Georgia, which is responsible for overhauling C-130 propellers for the Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps, “should have detected and removed” the corrosion, investigators wrote. They blamed “negligent practices, poor procedural compliance, lack of adherence to publications and an ineffective” quality control program at the compound. They also cited insufficient oversight by the Navy.

Additionally, technicians failed to follow Navy guidelines for inspecting C-130 propellers, which are more stringent than guidelines for the Air Force. Air Force C-130s make up the vast majority of the military’s C-130 fleet the technicians work on.

The Air Force said the service has since agreed to adopt the Navy’s propeller policies.

The plane — dubbed Yankee 72 — had flown more than 1,300 hours after its last maintenance update at the Georgia facility before the corroded propeller blade cracked and broke loose July 10, 2017 over the Mississippi Delta. The blade traveled from the left side of the plane and tore through plane’s fuselage. That impacted the propeller from one of the plane’s two right-side engines to break



WLBT-TV/AP

A military plane burns after crashing in a farm field in Itta Bena, Miss., in July 2017. Investigators say “negligent” maintenance practices contributed to the crash, according to a report released Wednesday.

loose and dislodge the plane’s stabilizer.

Within moments, the KC-130T broke into three pieces at 20,000 feet before crashing into a soybean field near Itta Bena, Miss., leaving a fiery debris field scattered for more than a mile. Most likely, everyone aboard the plane would have immediately experience shock, disorientation and below-freezing conditions, investigators wrote.

They never had any chance to save the plane.

The flight crew killed in the crash included members of Marine Aerial Refueling and Transport Squadron 452, based at Stewart Air National Guard Base in Newburgh, N.Y.: Capt. Sean Elliott, Maj. Caine Goyette, Sgt. Owen Lennon, Staff Sgt. Joshua Snowden, Gunnery Sgt. Brendan Johnson, Gunnery Sgt. Mark Hopkins, Sgt. Julian Kevianne, Marine Cpl. Daniel Baldassare and Cpl. Collin Schaff.

The others killed belonged to the Marines’ elite special operations unit, 2nd Raider Battalion based at Camp Lejeune in North Carolina. They were Marine Sgt. Dietrich Schiemen, Sgt. Joseph Murray, Sgt. Chad Jensen, Sgt. John Kevianne, Sgt. Talon Leach, Staff Sgt. Robert Cox and Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Ryan Lohrey, a hospital corpsman assigned to the unit. The group was traveling to California to conduct pre-deployment training.

While investigators concluded Marines with Aerial Refueling and Transport Squadron 452 had not properly inspected propeller blades or kept detailed maintenance records, they determined the corrosion would not likely

have been detected by such routine inspections.

Instead, they place the vast majority of blame squarely on Warner Robins Air Logistics Complex workers. The investigation cites technicians conducting propeller maintenance without consulting documented procedures and failing to properly record from which military service the propellers they were working on belonged.

The Air Force cannot say which technicians had inspected the corroded blade in 2011. It had disposed of maintenance records after two years because of its own policy.

Investigators found problems in 13 of the downed KC-130T’s 16 propeller blades that should have been caught by technicians when the plane was last at the Georgia facility in 2011. That includes 12 propeller blades found to have undetected corrosion.

Following the plane crash, the Marine Corps and Navy grounded their entire fleet of C-130s until all of the planes’ propellers could be replaced. Investigators outlined 17 steps to standardize and improve propeller blade maintenance and overhaul procedures at Warner Robins Air Logistics Complex.

In September 2017, the complex halted all C-130 blade overhauls, which is expected to continue into early 2019. Officials said they were continuing to work to implement necessary changes raised by investigators of the July 2017 KC-130T crash.

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Collision: Military search and rescue operations continue

FROM FRONT PAGE

At 12:13 p.m., the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force ship JS Setoyuki found and rescued a second Marine, a spokesman with the Defense Ministry’s Joint Staff said. But the Marine, who was aboard the F/A-18 Hornet, had died, according to U.S. officials.

“The search and rescue operations continue for the remaining five U.S. Marines who were aboard the KC-130 Hercules and F/A-18 Hornet involved in a mishap,” according to a statement posted on a Marines Facebook page.

A Navy P-8A Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance Aircraft from the U.S. 7th Fleet flew out of Kadena Air Force Base to help with the search and rescue efforts, according to the Marines.

“All available resources are being brought to bear,” Lt. Gen. Jerry Martinez, commander of U.S. Forces Japan, said in a tweet by USFJ on Thursday. “Thank you #JSDF for your rapid response during this time of need. Our thoughts & prayers are with everyone involved.”

Japanese Defense Minister Takeshi Iwaya said Thursday that Japan was putting its “best effort into the search and rescue.” Aircraft from the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force and the Japan Air Self-Defense Force immediately responded to the emergency.

President Donald Trump tweeted about the incident Thursday afternoon: “My thoughts and prayers are with the @USMC crew members who were involved in a mid-air collision off the coast of Japan. Thank you to @USForcesJapan for their immediate response and rescue efforts. Whatever you need, we are here for you.”

The Marines refuel aircraft differently than the Air Force, said Carl Baker, executive director of the Pacific Forum think tank in Hawaii.

Instead of a boom extending from the fuselage, the KC-130 has hoses hanging from its wing tanks. When pilots want to refuel, they steer a boom attached to the front of their aircraft into a drogue receptacle that looks like a basket on the end of the KC-130’s refueling hose, he said.

“They don’t get as close [as refueling Air Force planes] because the thing runs out quite a way from the back of the airplane,” Baker said. However, refueling is a dangerous operation, he said.

Videos of refueling mishaps show drogue baskets slamming into planes and broken hoses whipping around and spraying aircraft with fuel.

Baker said refuelers have crashed in the past but he wasn’t aware of such an incident during refueling.

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PACIFIC

N. Korea reportedly expands missile base

By KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea has significantly expanded a key long-range missile base near the Chinese border, according to reports citing new satellite images that provide more evidence the communist state is persisting with its nuclear weapons program despite U.S.-led diplomatic efforts to stop it.

The findings come as nuclear talks between Pyongyang and Washington have stalled months after leader Kim Jong Un met with President Donald Trump in Singapore and promised to work toward the "complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula."

The commercial imagery, which was analyzed by researchers at the California-based Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey, shows construction taking place at the existing missile base called Yeongjeong-dong and a second site known as Hojeung-ri, about 7 miles away, CNN and NPR reported Wednesday.

The location of the base in the remote, mountainous area of Yeongjeong-dong has long been known to U.S. intelligence agencies, but the apparent new facility had not been previously publicly identified, according to the report, which added that it's unclear whether the new base is separate or an extension of the existing facility.

"This missile base could be a future deployment site for missiles that could strike the United States," Catherine Dill, a senior research associate with the institute, told CNN.

The bases are believed to be shelters for mobile missile launchers, not production facilities, according to NPR.

South Korea's military declined to comment on the report but said during a press conference Thursday that Yeongjeong-dong is one of the major areas that is under surveillance by Seoul and Washington.

There was no immediate response to the report from the U.S. administration, which has dismissed similar findings in the past.

North Korea also announced it had tested an unspecified "newly developed ultra-

modern weapon" last month.

Trump, meanwhile, has said he hopes to hold a second summit with Kim early next year.

National security adviser John Bolton said the president thinks another meeting would help move the process forward.

"They have not lived up to the commitments so far. That's why I think the president thinks another summit is likely to be productive," Bolton said Tuesday during a forum.

"If the North Koreans follow through on the commitments they made in Singapore, President Trump will deserve the Nobel Peace Prize," Bolton added. "He opened the door for them; now they have to walk through it."

Experts are quick to point out the North Koreans didn't make any concrete commitments during the Singapore summit, and subsequent negotiations on details have failed to progress amid disagreements and conflicting demands.

The communist state has suspended its nuclear and missile-testing program,

which raised fears of a nuclear war last year.

It also destroyed its main nuclear testing site and begun dismantling a missile launch site.

But it has called for a reciprocal approach that would include rewards for steps taken such as easing international sanctions and declaring a formal end to the stalemated 1950-53 Korean War.

Trump and his allies have insisted that they will maintain economic pressure on the North until what it calls final, fully verified denuclearization is achieved.

On the peninsula, the Koreans pressed forward to improve relations with the implementation of a far-reaching military agreement reached in September.

South Korea's Defense Ministry said the two sides will exchange inspection teams across their heavily fortified border next week to verify promised work to remove several front-line guard posts.

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APRIL YOUNG-JOON/AP

South Korean army soldiers stand guard at a guard post inside the Demilitarized Zone in Cheorwon, South Korea, on Monday.

Koreas set to verify removal of DMZ border guard posts

By HYUNG-JIN KIM
Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — The two Koreas will exchange inspection teams across their heavily armed border next week to verify each other's works to remove some of their front-line guard posts, Seoul's Defense Ministry said Thursday.

In the past weeks, North and South Korea each have dismantled or dismantled 11 of their border guard posts as part of agreements to reduce tensions that were reached during their leaders' summit in Pyongyang in September.

Vice Defense Minister Suh Choo-uk told reporters that the two Koreas agreed to conduct one-day mutual verification on the sites of the guard posts next Wednesday. He said the Koreans will send 11 military inspection teams to the other's 11 sites.

Suh said the mutual verification is proof of trust established between the two militaries.

The dismantled or dismantled guard posts were located inside

the 155-mile-long Demilitarized Zone, the strip of land that bisects the Korean Peninsula. It's the world's most heavily fortified border, strewn with an estimated 2 million land mines, and has been the scene of numerous cases of violence and bloodshed.

Under the September agreements, the Koreans have also taken steps to demilitarize the shared border village of Panmunjom inside the DMZ, halted live-fire drills along the border and have been removing mines to conduct joint searches for Korean War dead.

These steps have triggered a fierce backlash from many conservatives in South Korea, who argue that South Korea's liberal government led by President Moon Jae-in should not have agreed to such conventional arms reduction programs at a time when North Korea's nuclear threats remain unchanged. The latest removal of guard posts would leave South Korea with about 50 such DMZ posts and North Korea with 150, according to defense experts in South Korea.

North Korea sends top diplomat for talks with its key ally China

By CHRISTOPHER BODEEN
Associated Press

BEIJING — North Korea's foreign minister arrived in key ally China on Thursday for talks amid stalled efforts to persuade his government to dismantle its nuclear weapons programs.

Ki Yong Ho is to meet Friday with his Chinese counterpart, Wang Yi, according to China's Foreign Ministry.

China is North Korea's most important economic and political partner, but has agreed to United Nations economic sanctions aimed at pressuring leader Kim Jong Un to abandon his drive to develop nuclear weapons and the ballistic missiles to deliver them.

Kim sharply raised tensions with nuclear and missile tests last year, but suddenly reached out to South Korea and the United States this year with a vague nuclear disarmament pledge. North Korea is now seeking security guarantees from the U.S. and relief from the international sanctions.

Ri is also expected to be briefed on discussions last week between Chinese President Xi Jinping and President Donald Trump, who recently said his next meeting with Kim would likely happen in January or February.

Despite the initial optimism generated by Kim and Trump's June summit meeting in Singapore, little has transpired since then.

At the time, some experts said the United States could soon accept a North Korean request for a joint declaration of the end of the 1950-53 Korean War as part of security assurances to the North. But diplomacy has since come to a halt amid disputes over a U.S. demand that North Korea first produce a full inventory of its nuclear weapons and take other denuclearization steps be-



MADOKA INEGAMI, KYODO NEWS/AP

North Korean Foreign Minister Ri Yong Ho arrives at the Beijing International airport Thursday.

fore winning significant outside rewards.

North Korea wants sanctions relief, the end-of-war declaration and other reciprocal measures from the United States, arguing it has taken some steps, like dismantling its nuclear testing facility and releasing American detainees.

China fought on North Korea's behalf during the Korean War, and while ties have grown frosty at times, Xi hosted Kim for three summits in China this year, both before and after Kim's meeting with Trump.

However, Xi did not attend celebrations of the 70th anniversary of North Korea's founding in September in what was seen as an indication that Beijing expected further actions from Kim, including concrete progress toward denuclearization.

Ri's visit also comes amid intense speculation over the possibility that Kim will visit South Korea this month.

No North Korean leader has traveled to South Korea since fighting stopped in the Korean

War, which killed millions. There have been five summit meetings between the leaders of the Koreas, three of them between Kim and South Korean President Moon Jae-in, but they all happened either in Pyongyang, North Korea's capital, or the inter-Korean border village of Panmunjom.

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WAR ON TERRORISM

2017 attacks make Afghanistan the deadliest country

By J.P. LAWRENCE
Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — Afghanistan became the world's deadliest terrorism hot spot in 2017 due to the escalation of the war and fewer incidents elsewhere, a new report said.

One in every four people who died from an act of terrorism last year lived in Afghanistan, according to Australia's Institute for Economics and Peace think tank.

Last year the country suffered more than 1,000 attacks, leaving 4,653 dead and 5,015 injured, the report released Wednesday said.

Meanwhile, casualties from terrorism throughout the world declined for the third consecutive year, due largely to the diminishment of Islamic State in Iraq and Syria. Both countries saw sharp declines in the number of terrorism deaths last year.

Europe also recorded a significant drop in 2017. Deaths worldwide are down by almost half since 2014, it said.

Iraq had been the deadliest country for terrorism since 2012 when the top spot belonged to Afghanistan.

Almost all districts in Afghanistan saw at least one terrorist attack last year, the report stated.

The report tabulated intentional acts or threats of violence by nonstate actors seeking to gain a political, economic, religious or social goal.

In a shift of tactics, the Taliban cut attacks on civilians by half in 2017, while increasing attacks on the security forces by a third, the report said. However, attacks

on civilians by the local Islamic State affiliate have risen in recent years, particularly in Kabul. The U.S. has designated 20 groups operating in Afghanistan and Pakistan as terrorist organizations, more than anywhere else in the world.

The Taliban control or contest about half of Afghanistan, according to a U.S. government watchdog.

On Tuesday, Army Lt. Gen. Richard Clarke, nominee to command America's special operations, said the Taliban have 60,000 fighters, more than double the previous estimate of 25,000.

More than 28,000 Afghan soldiers and police have been killed since 2015, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani said in November.

Zalmay Khalilzad, U.S. special envoy to Afghanistan, met Tuesday with Pakistani officials for talks on how to bring the Taliban to the negotiating table. The militant group has always demanded that all foreign troops pull out of the country.

Marine Corps Lt. Gen. Kenneth F. McKenzie Jr., nominee for head of Central Command, said Tuesday the U.S. should not withdraw precipitously because the Afghan security forces are not yet able to defend themselves.

"I don't know how long it will take," he said. "I do know that we're working it very hard. I do know that they are making improvements. I do know that today it would be very difficult for them to survive without our and our coalition partners' assistance."

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J.P. LAWRENCE/Stars and Stripes

Men identified as Taliban fighters or sympathizers watch a convoy of Afghan military forces during a June cease-fire in Logar province in Afghanistan. A new report says Afghanistan led the world in terrorism attacks by the Taliban and others in 2017.

Soldier who tried to help terrorists gets 25 years

By JENNIFER SINCO KELLEHER
Associated Press

HONOLULU — A soldier based in Hawaii was sentenced Tuesday to 25 years in prison for trying to help Islamic State.

Sgt. 1st Class Ikaika Kang, 35, pleaded guilty in August to four counts of attempting to provide material support to a foreign terrorist organization. He provided classified military documents, a drone and other help, he said.

"Your honor, I know what I did was wrong," Kang said before Senior U.S. District Judge Susan Oki Mollway imposed a sentence that includes 20 years of supervised release.

"When I'm released I won't do it again."

The sentence is part of a plea agreement. If convicted at a trial, Kang, 35, could have faced life in prison.

He provided the support to undercover agents Kang believed were part of ISIS.

"The conduct that you committed was extremely serious," Mollway said. "It had the potential to be disastrous."

More than six years ago, Kang became sympathetic to the group and to terrorism, Mollway said, and that by 2016 he talked about wanting to join and commit violence.

Kang provided voluminous, digital documents that had sensitive information including the U.S. military's weapons file, details about a sensitive mobile airspace management system, various military manuals and documents containing personal information about U.S. service members, prosecutors said.

Trained as an air traffic controller with a secret security clearance, Kang also provided

documents including call signs, mission procedures and radio frequencies, prosecutors said.

Soon after Kang's arrest, defense attorney Birney Bervar said his client may suffer from service-related mental health issues that the government was aware of but neglected to treat.

Several letters of support filed in court allude to mental health concerns.

An older sister wrote that Kang grew up in an abusive home and that the violence increased when their mother started using crystal methamphetamine.

Bervar requested Kang be sent to a detention facility where he can receive mental health help.

Kang is still in the Army, but he isn't being paid while in civilian confinement.

Bervar said he expects the Army will soon move to discharge Kang.

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MILITARY

Survey details issues facing wounded warriors

By NIKKI WENTLING

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A new survey of 33,000 wounded warriors has alerted advocates and government officials to ongoing problems with veterans' mental health and obesity.

In the latest annual survey from Wounded Warrior Project, completed in conjunction with the research firm Westat, 78 percent of participants reported experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder, up from 75 percent in 2014. In addition, 52 percent were listed as obese — an increase from 43 percent in the Wounded Warrior Project's 2014 survey.

The survey focused on post-9/11 veterans, most of whom have injuries and other health problems related to their military service. Of the 33,000 who answered the survey, 84 percent were male

and 53 percent lived in the southern United States. The average age was 40.

The results will be used by Wounded Warrior Project to determine where to focus its resources, said retired Army Lt. Gen. Michael Linnington, the nonprofit's CEO. At a release event Tuesday, Defense Department and Department of Veterans Affairs officials said they'd also use the survey results to inform their work.

"This survey is an instrument into how they're faring and what issues they face, and it really helps us as we work with the VA and other agencies in transitioning veterans from uniform life to civilian life," said Tony Kurta, a Pentagon official nominated for deputy undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness.

Keita Franklin, the VA's national director of suicide preven-

tion, said at the Tuesday event that her agency is attempting to make it easier for transitioning servicemembers to receive mental health care.

She touted an executive order issued by President Donald Trump earlier this year with the intent to increase new veterans' access to the VA. Franklin said the VA's focus is on 18- to 34-year-old veterans, among whom the rate of suicide has increased substantially during the past two years.

"We've now with this new [executive order] shared across our enterprise, if you're in the first 12 months, regardless of eligibility, just come in the door and we'll treat you," Franklin said. "We wanted to be barrier-free, hassle-free. When people need mental health care, it's not the time to be giving them a pile of paperwork to fill out."

While the Wounded Warrior

Project survey found 78 percent of warriors experienced PTSD, an estimated 3.6 percent of the U.S. adult population has been diagnosed with PTSD, according to the National Institute of Mental Health.

The Wounded Warrior Project has been conducting annual studies since 2010. Previous results prompted the nonprofit to establish a Warrior Care Network — a partnership between WWP and Emory Healthcare, Massachusetts General Hospital, Rush University Medical Center and UCLA Health to treat veterans with PTSD and traumatic brain injury.

In October, Wounded Warrior Project invested \$160 million into the program.

To address the obesity issue, the nonprofit started a 90-day coaching program. Based on the new survey, it hasn't yielded enough

results, Linnington said.

According to the survey results, the average body mass index for participants was 30.8, which falls into the range of obesity. Of the 52 percent classified as obese, 6.2 percent are morbidly obese. Among the rest of the U.S. population, 40 percent of adults are classified as obese.

In response to a survey question about their diets, nearly one-third of participants said they ate no fruits in their normal diet, and almost 15 percent said they didn't eat vegetables.

"The one area that's alarming to me personally as an Army officer of 35 years is the negative trend in terms of physical health and wellness, obesity and lack of activity," Linnington said. "It's a continuing concern, so we're going to continue to invest."

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Pearl Harbor reburials across US give families closure

Associated Press

HONOLULU — More than 75 years after nearly 2,400 members of the U.S. military were killed in the Japanese attack at Pearl Harbor, some who died on Dec. 7, 1941, are finally being laid to rest in cemeteries across the United States.

In 2015, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency exhumed nearly 400 sets of remains from the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Hawaii after determining that advances in forensic science and genealogical help from families could make identifications possible. They were all on the USS Oklahoma, which capsized during the attack, and had been buried as unknowns after the war.

Together, 429 sailors and Marines on board the Oklahoma were killed. Only 35 were identified in the years immediately after the attack. The Oklahoma's casualties were second only to those of the USS Arizona, which lost 1,177 men.

As of earlier this month, the agency has identified 186 sailors and Marines from the Oklahoma that were previously unidentified.

Slowly, the remains are being sent to be reburied in places like Traer, Iowa, and Ontonagon, Mich.

Here's a look at some of those who have either been reburied this year or who will be on Jan. 15.

■ **Durrell Wade**, Wade was born in 1917 in the Hardin Town community of rural Calhoun County, Miss. He enlisted in the Navy in 1936 and in 1940 re-enlisted for another two-year tour.

His burial in his home state was originally planned for a weekend when it would be most convenient for people to attend. But because of scheduling conflicts at the North Mississippi Veterans Memorial Cemetery, his family decided the 77th anniversary of the attack would be an appropriate date, even if some people have to take time off, said his nephew, Dr. Lawrence Wade.

He was one of the sailor's relatives who provided DNA to help identify him.

"My middle name is his name, Durrell. My grandson has that name also," said the 75-year-old retired psychiatrist from Baton Rouge, La. "I'd gone through my life not really knowing anything about him, other than I carried his name and he was killed at Pearl Harbor. Once this DNA process



CHRIS ZOELLER, (MASON CITY, IOWA) GLOBE-GAZETTE/AP

Sailors fold the U.S. flag draped over the casket of Seaman 1st Class Leon Arickx, who died at Pearl Harbor, at Sacred Heart Cemetery in Osage, Iowa, in July. Remains of casualties in the Dec. 7, 1941, attack are gradually being identified and returned to the U.S. for burial.

came along and made it possible to identify his remains, it just made him much more of a real person to me."

Wade's siblings included four older sisters and one older brother, according to a biography prepared by his nephew. The Wade children were educated by two teachers hired by their parents to live in the home and teach them until a community school was built on donated property. Wade had written home in September 1941 that he had just taken promotion tests from aviation machinist mate 2nd class to chief aviation machinist mate.

His nephew has been planning his funeral. A gospel singer will sing the national anthem. Bagpipers will play. Pilots will conduct a flyover. Mississippi Gov. Phil Bryant and Capt. Brian Hortsmann, commanding officer of Naval Air Station Meridian, will make remarks.

■ **William Bruesewitz**, Renate Starck has been pondering the eulogy she'll give at the funeral for her uncle, Navy Seaman 1st Class William Bruesewitz, on Friday.

"We always have thought of him on Dec. 7," she said. "He's already such a big part of that history."

Bruesewitz, of Appleton, Wis., will be buried in Arlington National Cemetery, near Washington. "It's a real blessing to have him returning and we've chosen Arlington because we feel he's a hero and belongs there," Starck said.

About 50 family members from Wisconsin, Florida, Arkansas and Maryland will attend.

"We were too young to know him but we're old enough that we felt his loss," Starck said. "We know some stories. There's this stoicism about things from that time that kept people from talking about things that hurt."

■ **William Kvidera**, Hundreds of people filled a Catholic church in Traer, Iowa, in November for William Kvidera's funeral. The solemn ceremony in his hometown included full military honors, the Waterloo-Cedar Falls Courier reported.

"It's something like a dream," his brother, John Kvidera, 91, said.

John Kvidera was 14 when he found out about the bombings at Pearl Harbor and remembers huddling around a radio to find out what was going on. The family initially received a telegram saying William, the

oldest of six siblings, was missing in action. A telegram in February 1943 notified the family of his death.

■ **Robert Kimball Holmes**, The remains of Marine Pfc. Robert Kimball Holmes were interred in August in his hometown of Salt Lake City.

"It's strange, isn't it, to be here honoring a 19-year-old kid killed 77 years ago," nephew Bruce Holmes said.

Only one person in attendance at the graveside services — another nephew and namesake, Bob Holmes — had any personal memories of the Marine, The Salt Lake Tribune reported.

The younger Bob is now more than four times older than the sailor when he died. He remembers his uncle coming home on leave in the summer of 1941 when he was 6 years old.

Bob Holmes recalled talking to a friend of his uncle who served with him on the Oklahoma. "He said, 'One of the things that I remember most about Bob is that he had this attitude. Not just a Marine attitude, but a Holmes boy attitude — defiance, aggression and don't mess with me.'"

■ **Leon Arickx**, More than 76 years after he died, the remains of Navy Seaman 1st Class Leon Arickx were buried on a brilliant summer day at a small cemetery amid the cornfields of northern Iowa.

Hundreds gathered in July for Arickx's graveside service at Sacred Heart Cemetery outside Osage, Iowa, in a sparsely populated farming region just south of Minnesota, where Arickx grew up. Among them was his niece, Janice Schnork, who was a baby when Arickx died.

"My family talked about him all that time," said Schnork, 77. "I felt I knew him because everyone talked about him."

Although they didn't have Arickx's remains, his family held a memorial service and placed a grave marker at Sacred Heart Cemetery in 1942. When his remains were finally returned, they were buried at a site near far away.

Schnork said her family appreciates the work it took to identify her uncle, but she believes it's essential to identify as many servicemembers as possible.

"I think we need to honor these people who give their lives to our country and bring them back to their home country where they can be close to family and can honor them," she said. "No one should be left behind."

MILITARY



A team of about 60 pieced together eight interconnecting tents and stocked them with vital medical equipment in less than four hours.

3rd Battalion sets up quickly for crucial care

By CARLOS M. VAZQUEZ II
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — Between the battlefield and a hospital lies a critical stage of care for a wounded sailor or Marine.

That's the job of 3rd Medical Battalion, 3rd Marine Logistics Group, which displayed its ability to quickly erect a self-sustaining mobile trauma and surgical unit close to the fighting during a recent three-day exercise.

A battalion team of about 60 members pieced together eight interconnecting tents and stocked them with medical equipment — an operating room, portable X-ray machine, blood-banking capabilities and space for 20 beds — in less than four hours. The facility must then be able to receive casualties within an hour of the battalion arriving on site, battalion commander Capt. Ronald L. Schoonover told Stars and Stripes.

"It's very important to have a dedicated team to get patients somewhere they can be treated,

stabilized and sent back home," said Petty Officer 2nd Class Aaron Parks.

The late November exercise not only provided the battalion team — one of eight — an opportunity to practice its skills but also to put those skills on display for other servicemembers.

"Our job is to deploy with the Marines and sailors of 3rd Marine Expeditionary Force," Schoonover said. "The more medical capability you can push forward decreases morbidity and mortality."

Each team consists of emergency room-trained doctors, nurses, an anesthesiologist, physician assistants and hospital corpsmen. The facility is a type called Role 2, the second of four levels of medical care that starts with a corpsman on the battlefield and progresses to a hospital somewhere far from the conflict.

"It's all about capabilities and supplies," Parks said. "The Role 1 that goes right along with combat units can only sustain patients for 12 to 24 hours before they run out



PHOTOS BY CARLOS M. VAZQUEZ II/Stars and Stripes

Sailors and Marines assigned to 3rd Medical Battalion, 3rd Marine Logistics Group showcase their medical capabilities for battlefield environments at Camp Foster, Okinawa, during an exercise last month.



Petty Officer 2nd Class Damian Garcia, left, and Lt. Gloria Oakman perform an emergency operation on a dummy during the exercise.



Petty Officer 2nd Class Aaron Parks, left, and Lt. Christine Peterlin practice the Role 2 medical care they are trained to provide in combat zones.

of equipment."

In Role 2, 3rd Battalion provides urgent, intermediate care for wounded servicemembers that includes resuscitation and damage-control surgery before they reach a hospital, which is Role 3.

"We are here to perform emergency medical and surgical procedures that, if not performed, could lead to loss of life, limb or eyesight," Schoonover said.

The teams must be ready to re-

ceive casualties in an hour or less, starting with the shock trauma system. All other components are built around a process developed and improved with experience.

Schoonover, who has served multiple tours in Iraq and Afghanistan, said he feels reassured when he hears that sailors and Marines who have been through a Role 2, whether in battle or through exercises like this one, understand battalion capabilities.

"It gives leaders the impetus

to send their sailors and Marines into battle because they know if they get injured, we're going to take care of them," he said. "Afghanistan was a 98.6 percent survival rate, and a lot of innovation went into that, but we're good enough now that if anybody shows up here, they're more than likely going to live, and I'm proud to be a part of that."

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MILITARY

Crucial cryogenics

Kadena lab, the only one of its kind, helps keep aircraft in the sky

By MATTHEW M. BURKE
Stars and Stripes

KADENA AIR BASE, Okinawa — Nestled close to Kadena's flight line sits a small, unassuming off-white building with nondescript lettering on the side. Without it, operations at the largest air base in the Pacific would screech to a halt.

The 18th Logistics Readiness Squadron's cryogenics production facility is the only one in the Air Force and it produces and supplies the oxygen and nitrogen that keeps every U.S. military aircraft on Okinawa in the sky.

It also supplies lifesaving oxygen to U.S. Naval Hospital Okinawa, and locally when the only civilian provider on the island goes down.

"We are a vital link to Kadena's success," said Senior Airman Michael Hall, 26, from Valdosta, Ga.

He is one of nine airmen — clad in white utility uniforms, gloves, rubber aprons and plastic face shields — in the Air Force capable of running Kadena's cryogenics plant by themselves.

"People don't really realize what goes on behind the scenes," Hall said. "We always see the aircraft, we always see the planes flying, but you don't think, 'OK if they go to a certain altitude, they can't breathe.' We're a critical link in any mission scenario when it comes to generating any kind of sorties out of Kadena."

Every Air Force base in the world has a storage facility supplying cryogenic products to keep its aircraft airborne. However, only one Air Force facility makes its own, and it is at Kadena.

The airmen in Kadena's cryogenics lab produce mostly liquid oxygen, which is converted to breathable oxygen for pilots, said cryogenic production operator Senior Airman Christopher Tallan. The product is in high demand, with 35 flight groups at Kadena alone.

Liquid oxygen is also used at the naval hospital for breathable oxygen and in anesthesia. Liquid nitrogen is not in such high demand, but that too is produced at the facility, Tallan said. It is used in aircraft fire-suppres-

See video of the airmen in action at the cryogenics lab at [stripes.com/cryogenics](https://www.stripes.com/cryogenics)



sion modules and to fill aircraft tires. Gaseous nitrogen is less volatile than atmospheric air. It is also used to burn off warts at the naval hospital or at the island's other military health clinics.

The liquid forms of oxygen and nitrogen are denser than the gaseous forms. Liquid oxygen, for example, generates more breathable air than can be stored as a gas.

"One gallon of liquid oxygen is several hundred cubic feet of breathable air," Tallan said.

If purchased from an off-base provider, liquid oxygen usually costs about \$6 per gallon, Tallan said. By making their own, the airmen at Kadena save the Air Force and the U.S. taxpayers around \$4 per gallon.

'Has to be ready'

Kadena's plant usually runs for a week straight, 24 hours a day, about every three weeks, filling its depleted stocks before going dormant again, Tallan said. They can produce approximately 50 gallons of product per hour or as much as 1,000 gallons in a day.

The plant was not running Oct. 24. However, the airmen received an order to fill six 50-gallon liquid oxygen carts out of its stocks for air operations. The "lox carts" look like a cross between a wheelbarrow and a trailer.

Those calls can come at any time, day or night.

Tallan and Senior Airman Jarvis Harper donned their protective gear and exited the building, working alongside their four 6,000-gallon tanks, two for liquid oxygen and two for liquid nitrogen.

Before they filled the order, they collected a sample of the liquid oxygen to check it for any impurities. The air filled with smoky vapor as the minus-300 degree liquid reacted with the sticky, tropical Okinawan air.

The airmen connected a hose to the massive liquid oxygen tank through a centralized docking station. The line immediately turned frosty. One by one they

connected the hose to the lox carts and turned the nozzle. The rush of liquid oxygen could be heard splashing against the inside of each tank.

"You're responsible for the maintenance on the tanks; you're responsible for making sure the product is good; it has to have a certain purity," Tallan said. "At the drop of a hat, your shop has to be ready to fill a lox cart. Any hour of the day, Christmas, holidays, weekends, 1 a.m. in the morning."

Carts are dropped off to be filled and picked up by the air units that need them, Tallan said. Numerous F-15s can be filled off a single lox cart.

There are five basic steps Kadena's cryogenics producers go through to create their product. The airmen enter their plant, which is a twisted mass of electrical boxes, pipes and containment vessels. A computer turns on the systems.

The first step sees a compressor take in atmospheric air, which rests at 15 pounds per square inch, and compresses "a lot" of it into a really small space, Tallan said. The compressed air heats up to slightly less than 120 degrees Fahrenheit.

The air then moves into a chiller unit, which keeps the air compressed but cools it to about 40 degrees Fahrenheit, Tallan said. That is far below room temperature but not quite freezing. It then rests at about 55 pounds per square inch.

Then the product moves to drier beds, which are filled with "molecular sieves," Tallan said. This allows smaller molecules through but not larger ones. More water and carbon dioxide are pulled out of the product.

"It's essentially just another really big filter," Tallan said.

The product, which has now been drained over and over for impurities and sits at about 40-50 degrees Fahrenheit, then moves to a giant column — called the "cold box" — that stretches from floor to ceiling, Tallan said. The product builds up in the column and is spread out. As it expands, the temperature drops.

Forty degrees Fahrenheit and 55 pounds per square inch become minus-321 degrees Fahrenheit and one pound per square inch.

"Spreading out a gas makes it colder and compressing it makes it hotter," Tallan said. "It's pretty neat."

The liquid is then pumped out side to the 6,000-gallon tanks. Kadena's plant usually keeps about 9,000 gallons each of liquid oxygen and liquid nitrogen on hand at any given time.

"We have to do hourly checks to make sure nothing is malfunctioning," Tallan said in an Air Force statement in August. "We're responsible for knowing what's supposed to be going on. With such a big plant and so many pipes, we have to make sure that nothing is in a pipe that shouldn't be in it, and make sure things are



PHOTOS BY CARLOS VAZQUEZ/Stars and Stripes

Senior Airman Michael Hall tests liquid oxygen produced at the cryogenics laboratory at Kadena Air Base, Japan, in October.

at the right temperature in the pipes they're supposed to be in."

'The big hazard'

Tallan, a 20-year-old from Chico, Calif., spent over a year pumping and distributing fuel on Okinawa before he was moved to cryogenics.

The cryogenics laboratory seeks out and takes the best and brightest from the fuels career field, he said.

"When you show up to cryogenics from a different section, especially at Kadena, you're kind of thrust into the situation. You have to learn a massive amount of information about something [that's] never really been talked about at all in your career field," Tallan said. "It's an absolute juggernaut."

The job has the potential to be incredibly dangerous, Tallan and the other airmen at Kadena said. Both products can burn skin. Liquid nitrogen can incapacitate someone if it's not handled in a well-ventilated area.

"It's fatal," Tallan said. "The big hazard with nitrogen is asphyxiation, and the big hazard with liquid oxygen is spontaneous combustion."

Liquid oxygen is prone to combust if it comes in contact with a hydrocarbon, which could be anything from fuel to rust, certain plastics or even fingerprints on a tool.

Every month the airmen are forced to go over their tools with a blacklight, searching for the smallest hint of a hydrocarbon, Tallan said. Maintenance on a line that contained liquid oxygen is performed with a separate tool kit that is kept locked up.

"If a drop of fuel were to touch our product, there'd be a massive

explosion," Tallan said. "You have to be pretty thoughtful around this stuff."

Despite the dangers, the airmen assigned to Kadena's cryogenics facility say they wouldn't change a thing.

"It is massively rewarding," Tallan said. "Every ambulance needs oxygen on it and we provide that to them."

He said it was rewarding to know that if Okinawa's sole off-base production facility were to shut down, the island would not be "stranded" without the life-saving liquid oxygen.

Hall said that he and his fellow cryogenics airmen take a lot of pride in their work, because while they might not be well-known, they know how integral they are to operations.

"This is the only plant in the Air Force," he said. "It's a pretty big deal. I love this job."

There is another use for the liquid nitrogen employed by Kadena's cryogenics lab each year, and it makes the airmen smile each time it's mentioned. They make ice cream for Department of Defense Education Activity schoolchildren during STEM presentations.

"I think it's the best ice cream I've ever had," Tallan said. "It's insanely good."

The mixture is one part milk, one part half-and-half, a small amount of sugar and some fruit, like cut-up strawberries, and liquid nitrogen, which is poured on top while the mixture is being stirred. The transformation is instant.

"The kids get a kick out of it," Tallan said. "That's the scope of our mission, everything from saving lives to making ice cream."

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Hall operates machinery used to produce liquid oxygen at Kadena Air Base in October.

NATION

Semi-truck crashes into bus in Illinois, killing 2

By MATT BONESTEEL

The Washington Post

Two people were killed and nine were injured Wednesday night in Illinois when a semi-truck, traveling in the wrong direction, crashed head-on into a school bus carrying members of a Normal West High School girls' basketball team.

According to Illinois State Police spokeswoman Tracey Lillard, the crash took place at 8:32 p.m. local time on westbound Interstate 74 near Downs, Ill., just before the team was scheduled to arrive home from a game at Champaign Central.

Charles Crabtree, 72, who was a volunteer with the basketball team, was killed along with the driver of the truck, a 34-year-old man from Iowa whom Lillard de-

clined to identify. Lillard said it's unclear why the truck driver was traveling eastbound on westbound I-74. Initial reports suggested that police had received calls warning them that a semi-truck was traveling in the wrong direction before the crash.

The eight students on board the bus suffered non-life-threatening injuries and were taken to a hospital via ambulance, while the team's coach was airlifted from the scene along with Crabtree and the truck driver. The police spokeswoman said the coach — a teacher at the school — had suffered "serious" injuries.

Normal West Athletic Director Stan Lewis told the Pantagraph that the team was the school's freshman squad, though there some older students mixed in.

"It's our freshman team, but we only have a handful of freshmen who aren't also up on the varsity," he said. "There were some JV players who went with them."

Dayna Brown, a spokeswoman for Normal West's school district, said the school will be open Thursday with counselors on hand. They also were available Wednesday night at Normal West, where parents and relatives had gathered to await news.

"People care about each other in this school and this community, and I think they just wanted to be together during this horrible tragedy. ... We can't thank this community enough for their support," Brown told the Pantagraph. "We will be sure that everyone is supported in anything they need tomorrow."

Palin's son checks into Alaska halfway house

Associated Press

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — The elder son of former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin turned himself in to an Anchorage halfway house Wednesday to begin a year in custody following his conviction for assaulting his father, an official said.

Track Palin was initially scheduled to enter the halfway house Oct. 31 after a judge decided new assault allegations disqualified him from a court program aimed at rehabilitating veterans and said he would have to serve time instead.

But the 29-year-old Army veteran won a delay after his lawyer said a bed at an Anchorage treatment hospital for veterans became available. He checked into the halfway house Wednesday morning, said Trey Watson, of Geo Reentry of Alaska Inc., which operates the halfway house.

Palin in December 2017 was accused of breaking into his parents' home and leaving his father, Todd, bleeding from cuts on his head, authorities have said. He pleaded guilty to misdemeanor criminal trespass in that case after he was initially charged with felony burglary and misdemeanor counts of assault and criminal mischief.

Palin, who served a year in Iraq, has been accused of two other attacks on people close to him in recent years.

In September, Palin was arrested after a female acquaintance said he told her that she could not leave his house in Wasilla, took her phone and then hit her in the head, according to court documents.

The woman said they wrestled over the phone and that Palin let



CHARLES REX ARBOGAST/AP

Track Palin, shown at the Republican National Convention in St. Paul, Minn., in 2008, has turned himself in to serve time at a halfway house.

her leave after she screamed for help, according to an Alaska State Troopers affidavit. Troopers said Palin told them the two were arguing over how they said goodbye and that any injuries the woman had were self-inflicted.

Palin faces misdemeanor charges including assault, resisting arrest and disorderly conduct in that case.

Palin's plea arrangement called for him to serve 10 days in jail if he completed the therapeutic program and a year behind bars if he did not. Once Palin checks in to the halfway house, it's up to the Department of Corrections to determine if he will serve the time at the halfway house, on house arrest or in jail, according to Anchorage District Attorney Richard Allen.

Palin also was accused of punching his then-girlfriend in 2016. He pleaded guilty to misdemeanor possession of a firearm while intoxicated, and other charges were dismissed.

3 more states lose their Miss America licenses

Associated Press

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. — There they go. Miss America state groups in three more states have had their licenses revoked by the Miss America Organization following a bitter, high-stakes clash between state pageants and the national leadership headed by former Fox News host Gretchen Carlson.

The Miss America Organization sent termination letters Friday to New Jersey, New York and Florida. The Associated Press obtained two of the letters, and confirmed with leaders of the third state that it, too, had been revoked.

So far, the parent organization has sent termination letters to seven states, and leaders in an eighth state have resigned in protest.

The latest targets included the pageant's current and traditional home New Jersey, whose Boardwalk Hall hosts it each year in Atlantic City — and the state that has produced four of the last

six Miss Americas (New York), including the current Miss America, Nia Inani Franklin.

Earlier this year, the Miss America Organization had moved against Georgia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania and Tennessee, while Colorado's leaders quit.

The letter to Florida cites "the State Organization's default under the Agreement," but does not spell out what the violations were. The letter to New Jersey states that its agreement with the parent organization is not being renewed.

States whose licenses are terminated can request an appeal hearing within 10 days from Miss America's executive committee. After an appeal is heard, the Miss America Organization has the right to seek a new licensee.

The Miss America Organization declined to discuss the shakeup.

Over the summer, dozens of state organizations revolted against the national leadership of the pageant headed by Carlson.



CRAIG BAILEY, FLORIDA TODAY/AP

A SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket lifts off at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Cape Canaveral, Fla., on Wednesday.

SpaceX launches 5,800 pounds of supplies to space station; booster misses its landing

By CHABELI HERRERA

Orlando (Fla.) Sentinel

ORLANDO, Fla. — As 5,800 pounds of supplies successfully headed to the International Space Station from Cape Canaveral Wednesday, SpaceX's rocket booster zoomed back to Earth, making an unexpected splashdown in the Atlantic Ocean.

The mission, from launch complex 40 at the Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, took off at 1:16 p.m. Wednesday after a last-minute rodent-related delay this week. On Tuesday, mold was found on food bars for an experiment on the ISS involving about 40 mice that was set to analyze how space and aging relate.

Teams were able to replace the

bars before the launch.

Shortly after takeoff Wednesday, the booster that powered SpaceX's Falcon 9, which was carrying the supplies in its Dragon spacecraft, separated and started to chart a return. It was projected to land back at Landing Zone 1 in the Cape.

But one of the booster's grid fins malfunctioned, SpaceX founder Elon Musk tweeted Wednesday, causing the booster to spin erratically. It was able to stabilize before landing in the Atlantic Ocean about 2 miles offshore.

To prevent the problem in the future, the mogul said the company may add a backup pump to the fins to ensure they work properly.

In a post-launch briefing,

SpaceX's vice president of build and flight reliability, Hans Koenigsmann, said the booster's safety mechanism worked as planned.

"It actually targets a landing point in the water if it loses control, so in other words, it tries to stay safe," he said, adding that the booster also knows where buildings are and to avoid them.

The company has had 11 successful land landings — with Wednesday's being the first unsuccessful one.

In space, the Dragon spacecraft performed as expected and should reach the ISS on Saturday morning before docking there for about five weeks.

NATION

Border agent indicted for capital murder in 4 deaths

By JAMIE STENGLE
Associated Press

DALLAS — A U.S. Border Patrol agent who confessed to killing four sex workers told investigators he wanted to “clean up the streets” of his Texas border hometown, a prosecutor said Wednesday while announcing that a grand jury had indicted the man for capital murder.

Webb County District Attorney Isidro Alaniz said he will seek the death penalty for the September slayings and that evidence presented to the grand jury showed Juan Ortiz killed the women “in a cold, callous and calculating way.”

“The scheme in this case, from Ortiz’s own words, was to clean up the streets of Laredo by targeting this community of individuals who he perceived to be disposable, that no one would miss and that he did not give value to,” Alaniz said at a news conference.

Alaniz said Ortiz, 35, believed law enforcement didn’t do enough to curb prostitution, so he was “doing a service” by killing the women.

A suspect can be charged with



Ortiz

capital murder if he is suspected in more than one killing in the same scheme with an overarching motive, Alaniz said. Three of the women were shot to death, and the fourth was also shot but died of blunt force trauma.

Alaniz said the horrific nature of the killings and Ortiz’s vigilante mentality were factors in his decision to pursue the death penalty.

The Border Patrol intel supervisor and Navy veteran seemed to be living a typical suburban life with his wife and two children when the killings occurred. He was arrested after one victim was able to escape him and asked a state trooper for help.

“By day, he was a family man. He appeared normal by all accounts and circumstances,” Alaniz said. “At the nighttime, he was somebody else — hunting the streets ... for this community of

people and arbitrarily deciding who he was going to kill next.”

Alaniz said Ortiz knew some of the victims but he wouldn’t elaborate on what kind of relationship they had. Melissa Ramirez, 29, was slain on Sept. 3, and Claudine Luera, 42, was killed on Sept. 13.

On Sept. 14, he picked up another woman, Erika Pena, who told investigators that Ortiz acted oddly when she brought up Ramirez’s slaying and later pointed a gun at her while they were in his truck at a gas station, according to court documents. Pena said Ortiz grabbed her shirt as she tried to get out of the truck, but she pulled it off and ran, finding a state trooper who was refueling his vehicle.

Ortiz fled and, he later told investigators, he then picked up and killed his last two victims — Guiselda Alicia Cantu, 35, and Janelle Ortiz, 28, a transgender woman whose birth name was Humberto Ortiz.

With Pena’s help, authorities were able to track Ortiz to a hotel parking garage where he was arrested.

Caravan migrant gives birth in US

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — A Honduran woman affiliated with a caravan of Central American migrants gave birth on U.S. soil shortly after entering the country illegally amid growing frustration about a bottleneck to claim asylum at official border crossings.

Border Patrol agents arrested the woman Nov. 26 after she entered the country illegally near Imperial Beach, Calif., across the border from Tijuana, Mexico, Customs and Border Protection said Wednesday. She was arrested with her 20-year-old husband and 2-year-old son.

The woman, who was eight months pregnant, was taken to a hospital after complaining about abdominal pain the day after her arrest. Customs and Border Protection said.

The family was released from custody Sunday, pending the outcomes of their immigration cases.

Univision reported that the family is seeking asylum and hoped to join family in Columbus, Ohio, while their cases are pending.

Maryrury Serrano Hernandez, 19, told the network giving birth in the U.S. was a “big reward” for the family’s grueling journey.

U.S. inspectors at the main border crossing in San Diego are processing up to about 100 asylum claims a day, leaving thousands of migrants waiting in Tijuana. Some are crossing illegally and avoiding the wait.

President Donald Trump said in October that he could end birthright citizenship with a swipe of his pen. Most scholars on the left and right share the view that it would take a constitutional amendment to deny automatic citizenship to children born in the U.S. to parents who are in the country illegally.

Of the more than 6,100 migrants staying in a temporary shelter run by the city of Tijuana last week, 3,936 were men, 1,147 were women and 1,068 were children.

Scores of pregnant women traveled with the caravan through Mexico before reaching the U.S. border. In Pijijápan in the southern state of Chiapas, Dr. Jesus Miravete, who volunteered his services in the town’s plaza, said he treated a few dozen pregnant women, including 16 for dehydration after being on the road for weeks.

In October, a Guatemalan woman gave birth to the first known caravan baby at a hospital in Juchitan.

81 migrant children have been separated from families since June

By COLLEEN LONG
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration separated 81 migrant children from their families at the U.S.-Mexico border since the June executive order that stopped the general practice amid a crackdown on illegal crossings, according to government data obtained by The Associated Press.

Despite the order and a federal judge’s later ruling, immigration officials are allowed to separate a child from a parent in certain cases — serious criminal charges against a parent, concerns over the health and welfare of a child or medical concerns. Those caveats were in place before the zero tolerance policy that prompted the earlier separations at the border.

The government decides whether a child fits into the areas of concern, worrying advocates of the families and immigrant rights groups that are afraid parents are being falsely labeled as criminals.

From June 21, the day after President Donald Trump’s order, through Tuesday, 76 adults were separated from the children, according to the data. Of those, 51 were criminally prosecuted — 31 with criminal histories and 20 for other, unspecified reasons, according to the data. Nine were hospitalized, 10 had gang affili-



REBECCA BLACKWELL/AP

Migrants traveling with children walk up a hill to a waiting U.S. Border Patrol agent just inside San Ysidro, Calif., after climbing over the border wall from Playas de Tijuana, Mexico, on Monday.

ations and four had extraditable warrants, according to the immigration data. Two were separated because of prior immigration violations and orders of removal, according to the data.

“The welfare of children in our custody is paramount,” said Katie Waldman, a spokeswoman for the Department of Homeland Security, which oversees U.S. immigration enforcement. “As we have already said — and the numbers show, separations are rare. While there was a brief increase during zero tolerance as

more adults were prosecuted, the numbers have returned to their prior levels.”

At its height over the summer, more than 2,400 children were separated. The practice sparked global outrage from politicians, humanitarians and religious groups who called it cruel and callous.

A federal judge hearing a lawsuit brought by a mother who had been separated from her child ordered the government to reunite the families.

But the judge, Dana Sabraw, left the caveats in place and gave the option to challenge further separations on an individual basis.

American Civil Liberties Union attorney Lee Gelernt, who sued on behalf of the mother, said he hoped the judge would order the government to alert them to any new separations because right now the attorneys don’t know about them and therefore can’t challenge them.

According to the government data, from April 19 through Sept. 30, 170 family units were separated because they were found to not be related — that included 197 adults and 139 minors. That could also include grandparents or other relatives if there was no proof of relationship. Many people fleeing poverty or violence leave their homes in a rush and don’t have birth certificates or formal documents with them.

During the budget year 2017, which began in October 2016 and ended in September 2017, 1,065 family units were separated, which usually means a child and a parent — 46 due to fraud and 1,019 due to medical or security concerns, according to data.

Waldman said the data showed “unequivocally that smugglers, human traffickers, and nefarious actors are attempting to use hundreds of children to exploit our immigration laws in hopes of gaining entry to the United States.”

Trump, a Republican, used his national security powers to put in place regulations that denied asylum to anyone caught crossing illegally, but a judge has halted that change as a lawsuit progresses.

The zero tolerance policy over the summer was meant in part to deter families from illegally crossing the border. Trump administration officials say the large increase in the number of Central American families coming between ports of entry has vastly strained the system.

But the policy — and what it would mean for parents — caught some federal agencies off guard. There was no system in place to track parents along with their children, in part because after 72 hours children are turned over to a different agency, the Department of Health and Human Services, which has been tasked with caring for them.

An October report by Homeland Security’s watchdog found immigration officials were not prepared to manage the consequences of the policy. The resulting confusion along the border led to misinformation among separated parents who did not know why they had been taken from their children or how to reach them, longer detention for children at border facilities meant for short-term stays, and difficulty in identifying and reuniting families.

GEORGE H.W. BUSH 1924-2018

Bush goes home to Texas for final farewell

By WILL WEISSERT,
NOMAN MERCHANT
AND CALVIN WOODWARD
Associated Press

HOUSTON — America's final farewell to George H.W. Bush shifted to Texas on Thursday, with his friend and former Secretary of State James Baker addressing him as "Jefe," Spanish for "boss," and celebrating him as a president with "the courage of a warrior but the greater courage of a peacemaker."

Baker fought back tears as he concluded his eulogy.

Country music's Oak Ridge Boys, among the president's favorites, sang "Amazing Grace" and Reba McEntire offered "The Lord's Prayer" as three days of official ceremonies in Washington gave way to more personal touches for the Bush in Texas. The night before, more than 11,000 people paid their respects as his casket lay in repose all night at St. Martin's Episcopal Church, where his family worshipped.

At Thursday's funeral, Baker said, "The world became a better place because George Bush occupied the White House for four years." He said that Bush embodied some of the nation's best values, "temperate" in thought, word and deed, "our nation's very best one-term president."

George P. Bush, the former president's grandson and the only member of the political dynasty still holding elected office as Texas land commissioner, subsequently struck a more personal tone with the man he and the younger generations called "gampy."

The services attracted local sports stars including Houston Texans defensive end J.J. Watt and featured hymns chosen and loved by the former president.

The nation's capital bid him goodbye Wednesday in a Washington funeral that offered high praise for the last of the presidents to have fought in World War II — and a hefty dose of humor about a man whose speaking delivery was once described as a cross between Mister Rogers and John Wayne.

Bush's casket returned for the services in Houston, a ride on a special funeral train and eventual burial at his family plot on the presidential library grounds at Texas A&M University in College Station. His final resting place is alongside Barbara Bush, his wife of 73 years, and Robin Bush, the daughter they lost to leukemia at age 3.

In the service at Washington National Cathedral, three former presidents and President Donald Trump looked on as George W. Bush eulogized his father as "the brightest of a thousand points of light."

The cathedral service was a tribute to a president, a patriarch and a faded political era that prized military service and public responsibility. It was laced with indirect comparisons to Trump but was not consumed by them,



KIUCHIRO SATO/AP

Workers prepare for a departure ceremony for the casket of former President George H.W. Bush at Union Pacific Westfield auto facility in Spring, Texas, on Thursday.

as speakers focused on Bush's public life and character — with plenty of cracks about his goofy side too.

"He was a man of such great humility," said Alan Simpson, former Republican senator from Wyoming. Those who travel "the high road of humility in Washington, D.C.," he added pointedly, "are not bothered by heavy traffic."

Trump sat with his wife, a trio of ex-presidents and their wives, several of them sharp critics of his presidency and one of them, Hillary Clinton, his 2016 Democratic foe. Apart from courteous nods and some handshakes, there was little interaction between Trump and the others.

George W. Bush broke down briefly at the end of his eulogy while invoking the daughter his parents lost in 1953 and his mother, who died in April. He took comfort in knowing "Dad is hugging Robin and holding Mom's hand again."

It was a family that occupied the White House for a dozen years — the 41st president defeated after one term, the 43rd serving two. Jeb Bush stepped up to try to extend that run but fell short when Trump won the 2016 Republican primaries.

The elder Bush was "the last great soldier statesman," historian Jon Meacham said in his eulogy, "our shield" in dangerous times.

But he also said that Bush, campaigning in a crowd in a department store, once shook hands with a mannequin. Rather than flushing in embarrassment, he simply cracked, "Never know. Gotta ask."

Meacham recounted how comedian Dana Carvey once said the key to doing an impersonation of Bush was "Mister Rogers trying to be John Wayne."

None of those words would be a surprise to Bush. Meacham read his eulogy to him, said Bush spokesman Jim McGrath, and Bush responded to it with the



DAVID J. PHILLIP/AP

Former President George W. Bush, left, embraces former Secretary of State James Baker after Baker gave a eulogy Thursday for former President George H.W. Bush at St. Martin's Episcopal Church in Houston.

crack: "That's a lot about me, Jon."

The congregation at the cathedral, filled with foreign leaders and diplomats, Americans of high office and others touched by Bush's life, rose for the arrival of the casket, accompanied by clergy of faiths from around the world. In their row together, Trump and former Presidents Barack Obama, Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton stood with their spouses and all placed their hands over their hearts.

Simpson regaled the congregation with stories from his years as Bush's friend in Washington. More seriously, he recalled that when he went through a rough patch in the political game, Bush conspicuously stood by him against the advice of aides. "You would have wanted him on your

side," he said.

Simpson said Bush "loved a good joke — the richer the better. And he threw his head back and gave that great laugh, but he never ever could remember a punch line. And I mean never."

George W. Bush turned the humor back on the acerbic ex-senator, saying of the late president: "He placed great value on a good joke, so he chose Simpson to speak."

Meacham praised Bush's call to volunteerism — his "1,000 points of light" — placing it alongside Abraham Lincoln's call to honor "the better angels of our nature" in the American rhetorical canon. Meacham called those lines "companion verses in America's national hymn."

Former Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney praised

Bush as a strong world leader who helped oversee the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union and helped bring about the North American Free Trade Agreement with Canada and Mexico, signed into law by his successor, Clinton.

With Trump, a bitter NAFTA critic, seated in the front row, Mulroney hailed the "largest and richest free trade area in the history of the world." The three countries have agreed on a revised trade agreement pushed by Trump.

On Wednesday morning, a military band played "Hail to the Chief" as Bush's casket was carried down the steps of the U.S. Capitol, where he had lain in state. Family members looked on as servicemen fired off a cannon salute.

NATION

Dem will appeal to Walker to veto GOP power play

By SCOTT BAUER
AND TODD RICHMOND
Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. — The incoming Democratic governor of Wisconsin says he plans to make a personal appeal to his defeated rival, Republican Gov. Scott Walker, to veto sweeping GOP legislation that would strip the new administration of some powers.

If that doesn't work, Gov.-elect Tony Evers, said he might sue.

Wisconsin Republicans pushed through protests, internal disagreement and Democratic opposition to pass the bills after an all-night session. The measures would shift power to the Republican-controlled Legislature and weaken the authority of the governor and the attorney general. Republicans lost both seats in the November election.

The will of the people has officially been ignored by the Legislature," Evers said Wednesday. "Wisconsin should be embarrassed by this."

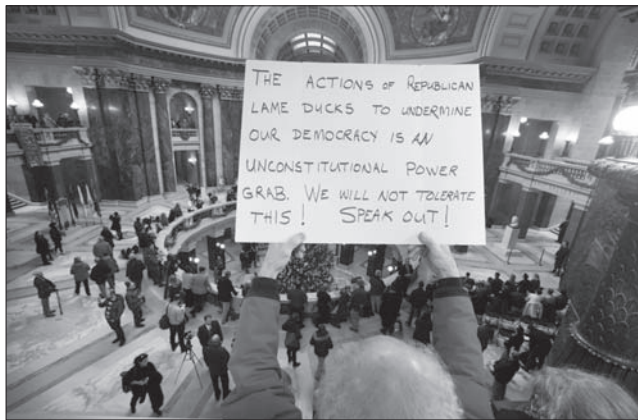
The GOP power grab comes after North Carolina lawmakers took similar steps two years ago and as Michigan Republicans discuss taking action before a Democratic governor takes over

in that state. Wisconsin Republicans were battered in the mid-term election, losing all statewide races amid strong Democratic turnout, yet retained legislative majorities thanks to what Democrats say are gerrymandered districts that tilt the map.

Evers said he would talk to Walker as soon as the bills reach the governor's desk. If he cannot persuade the governor to veto the proposals, Evers said he will consider lawsuits and any other option "to make sure that this legislation does not get into practice."

The votes early Wednesday were the height of a rare lame-duck legislative session. Walker has signaled his support for the bills; on Thursday, a spokesman said Walker was still reviewing the legislation and gave no timetable for action. Walker has 10 days to sign the package after it's delivered to his office.

The new legislation tries to protect some of the GOP's achievements in recent years, including a work requirement for some people receiving state health care and the state's role in a lawsuit seeking to overturn the Affordable Care Act. The bills could also make it harder for Evers to renegotiate a \$3 billion subsidy for a



MARK HOFFMAN, MILWAUKEE JOURNAL-SENTINEL/AP

People protest the Wisconsin Legislature's extraordinary session during the official Christmas tree lighting ceremony at the Capitol in Madison on Tuesday.

Foxconn electronics manufacturing facility, a deal spearheaded by Walker.

In neighboring Michigan, Republicans who control the Legislature voted to advance a measure that strips campaign-finance oversight power from the next secretary of state, a Democrat. They also moved to give lawmakers authority to stand up for GOP-backed laws if they think the incoming Democratic governor and attorney general are not adequately defending the state's interests.

The Wisconsin legislation passed in a session marked by stops and starts as GOP leaders tried to muster enough votes

in the Senate. That chamber ultimately approved the package 17-16, with just one Republican voting against it, around sunrise. The Assembly approved it on a 56-27 vote about two hours later, with a single Republican defecting.

In one concession, Republicans backed away from giving the Legislature the power to sidestep the attorney general and appoint their own attorney when state laws are challenged in court.

"This is a heck of a way to run a railroad," Democratic Senate Minority Leader Jennifer Shilling said as the Senate debate resumed at 5 a.m. Wednesday after a seven-hour impasse. "This is

embarrassing we're even here."

Walker is in his final five weeks as governor. Faced with a Democratic governor for the first time in eight years, Republicans came up with a package of lame-duck bills to preserve their priorities and make it harder for Evers to enact his.

"You're here because you don't want to give up power," Democratic Assembly Minority Leader Gordon Hintz said as debate concluded in that chamber. "You're sore losers. Does anybody think this is the right way to do business? If you vote for this, shame on you. You will go down in history as a disgrace."

Attempt to assassinate Trump detailed

By AMY B WANG
The Washington Post

Last fall, President Donald Trump flew to Mandan, N.D., to give a speech at the largest oil refinery in the state. His brief visit made a few minor headlines. In a rare show of bipartisanship, Trump had joined Heidi Heitkamp, then the state's Democratic junior senator, to tout his tax overhaul plan. (She would later oppose the bill.)

And once at the Mandan Refinery, Trump had spontaneously invited his eldest daughter, White House adviser Ivanka Trump, onto the stage, telling the crowd that she had asked, "Daddy, can I go with you?"

Last week, it was revealed that the trip was noteworthy for another reason: A North Dakota man had been arrested at the refinery on the day of Trump's visit, reportedly over a plan to assassinate the president — using a stolen forklift.

Gregory Lee Leingang, 42, was charged last fall with attempting to enter or remain in the refinery on Sept. 6, 2017, the day of Trump's visit, as well as one count of attempting to damage govern-

ment property. He pleaded guilty on Friday to the first count.

According to a copy of the plea agreement, Leingang knowingly entered and remained in a restricted area, "that is, the Mandan Refinery and its grounds and presidential motorcade route ... and in relation to the offense, did use a deadly and dangerous weapon, that is, a forklift."

"The intent was to basically try to get to the limo, flip the limo and get to the president, and he wanted to kill the president," U.S. Assistant State's Attorney Brandi Sasse Russell said, according to the Grand Forks Herald.

However, Leingang's strange plan went awry after he abandoned the forklift and was caught by police as he tried to run away, authorities said. He later admitted to police that he wanted to use the forklift to kill Trump.

The arrest capped off a string of crimes Leingang committed in the region that day, according to Mandan Deputy Police Chief Lori Flaten.

Earlier that morning, Leingang had set two fires in Bismarck, on the other side of the Missouri River, and had stolen a truck from the city's Parks and Recreation

Department, Flaten said.

Leingang later abandoned the truck, then crossed the river over to a sports complex under construction near the Mandan oil refinery — "which is where he got the forklift," Flaten said.

"He got around that day," Flaten told The Washington Post.

Though other news outlets reported that Leingang got the stolen forklift stuck in a "gated area," Flaten said he never made it that far into the refinery. Leingang dumped the forklift in a ditch and took off on foot afterward, she said, which is when authorities apprehended him.

"We had that whole area blocked off because of the president's visit, so there was limited access," Flaten said. "It wasn't until later, during interviews of him, that we found out that was his intention to kill the president, not that he was stealing a forklift for transportation."

Leingang pleaded guilty on Nov. 30 to one count of "attempting to enter or remain in a restricted building and on grounds while using a dangerous weapon," according to court records. Sentencing is scheduled for Feb. 15.

House Dems aim to roll back rule allowing guns in Capitol

By MIKE DEBONIS
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — House Democrats are looking to roll back a little-known, 5-decade-old Capitol Hill regulation that allows members of Congress to keep guns in their offices and carry them around the Capitol grounds.

The effort has been spearheaded by Rep. Jared Huffman, D-Calif., who has pressed Capitol Hill authorities to revisit the 1967 regulations for months, and he now has the support of Rep. Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., who has been nominated by her party to become House speaker early next year.

"I don't think we can just keep looking the other way or sweep this issue under the rug," Huffman said in an interview, citing potential threats to public safety and national security from a lost or stolen weapon — or an over-the-hill lawmaker. "Our political climate is too volatile and there are too many warning signs that we need to address things like this."

It is unclear how common it is for lawmakers to keep guns in their offices. Multiple Republican

lawmakers said this week that they are aware of colleagues who keep guns in the Capitol complex but do not know how widespread the practice is. Bringing firearms legally to Capitol Hill involves complying with strict District of Columbia gun laws which include a registration requirement.

Huffman said he has heard rumors about colleagues keeping weapons and carrying them on campus but did not have firsthand knowledge about any particular instance. The House Sergeant at Arms, he said, informed him in a briefing that Capitol authorities do not keep records or track which civilians might be in possession of firearms on the grounds.

But any attempt to roll back lawmakers' ability to keep firearms could become a partisan flash point between the new Democratic House majority — which is likely to pursue new gun control measures — and conservative Republicans who favor gun rights.

A Pelosi spokesman said that, if elected speaker, she would direct authorities to "revisit" the regulations "in the name of ensuring safety and security."

NATION

Residents return to town leveled by wildfire

By DON THOMPSON
AND OLGA R. RODRIGUEZ
Associated Press

PARADISE, Calif. — Nearly four weeks after the devastating blaze leveled her town, Jennifer Christensen was allowed back to return to her home in Paradise, where the first thing she saw was her son's charred tricycle in the front yard.

Christensen was among hundreds of residents who were allowed back into neighborhoods on the east side of town for the first time since the Nov. 8 blaze, which killed at least 85 people and destroyed about 14,000 homes.

"It's unbelievable. You know, I never thought it would happen to me," said Christensen, 34, surveying how little was left. She had moved to Paradise about a year ago and lived with a couple that were like grandparents to her son. "Everything I worked so hard for is gone."

The first thing she saw as she pulled in was her 2-year-old son's tricycle, its tires melted and its steel frame charred. She found a safe with melted jewelry inside. She found remnants of porcelain dolls that her grandmother had given her every year for Christmas.

"I lost my kid's handprints and footprints from when he was born," she said. "This is all stuff that can't be replaced."

Some residents have been allowed back into nearby communities in the fire zone, but Wednesday marked the first time residents of Paradise got to see firsthand what was left of their town of 27,000 people, which was hit the hardest by the blaze.

Paradise Police Chief Eric Reinbold said that areas home to 4,700 people were reopened but it wasn't clear how many people were there. Many survivors have scattered to homes of friends and family in other parts of California.



NOAH BERGEN/AP

Homes leveled by the Camp Fire line Valley Ridge Drive in Paradise, Calif., on Monday.

More than 50,000 people in Paradise and the neighboring communities of Magalia and Concow were forced to quickly flee the towering, wind-driven flames that charred an area about the size of Chicago — 240 square miles — and became the deadliest U.S. wildfire in at least a century. Authorities said 10 people were still unaccounted for.

Earlier in the day, a long line of cars waited in a cold drizzle at a checkpoint to enter areas where evacuation orders had been lifted.

Crews in yellow slickers were

still clearing debris from burned homes and removing trees from streets littered with melted plastic trash cans and hollowed vehicles on tireless rims.

The communities will have very limited services for the immediate future, and authorities urged returning residents to bring food, water and fuel for vehicles.

Pacific Gas & Electric Co. spokesman Dennis MacAleese said the utility has 4,000 people in the area working to restore electric and gas service to those who can receive it. He said the utility

hopes to restore electrical service by the end of the month and gas by the first quarter of next year.

Residents returning Wednesday were given kits with gloves and hazmat suits and warned that they should not move back into homes until ash and hazardous waste have been cleared, and that rain could increase the risk of flash floods and mudslides.

Rebecca Rogers, of Chico, came to support Christensen, a friend, as she sifted through the remains of her belongings.

Rogers believes she found the

remains of Christensen's cat, Marble, under what used to be her friend's bed.

"I don't want her to look. It's just too much, it's just too much," Rogers said, sobbing. "I've got to be strong. I've got to do this for her."

Rogers buried the cat's remains in the front yard.

Christensen said she is not sure of her future plans but feels so much loyalty for her town that recently she got a tattoo that reads, "Love is thicker than smoke," and below that on her arm: "Paradise Strong."

New study explains how deadly California 'firenado' was created

Associated Press

REDDING, Calif. — A rare fire tornado that raged during last summer's deadly Carr Fire in Northern California was created by a combination of scorching weather, erratic winds and an ice-topped cloud that towered miles into the atmosphere, according to a study announced Wednesday.

The churning funnel of smoke and flame killed a firefighter as it exploded in what already was a vast and devastating wildfire in July on the edge of Redding, about 250 miles north of San Francisco.

The wildfire claimed eight lives and destroyed more than 1,000 homes before it was contained on Aug. 30.

The study in the *Geophysical*

Research Letters journal used satellite and radar data to suggest how a monstrous "firenado" the size of three football fields developed on July 26.

It said the firenado was formed in much the same way as a regular tornado, which differs from the "fire whirls" that are formed only by heat from a wildfire.

The only other documented case of such a "firenado" was during the 2003 Canberra fires in Australia, according to the study.

A key factor was the development of a cloud generated by the fire itself that was ice-topped and grew quickly, doubling in length in just 15 minutes. It reached as high as 19,000 feet, according to the study, which was published on Nov. 21.

The development of that py-

rocumulonimbus cloud "helped stretch the underlying column of air, concentrating the rotation near the surface" and causing tornado-strength winds that reached 143 mph, according to the study.

"This paints a clear picture of the sequence of events leading to the vortex development and intensification," said Neil Lareau, of the University of Nevada, Reno, who co-authored the paper.

Other factors included record high temperatures, low humidity and a "near-surface cyclonic wind shear zone," according to the study. A wind shear occurs when the wind speed or direction suddenly changes so the wind actually is blowing in two opposite directions.

The wind shear near the ground



AP

This image taken from video and released by Cal Fire shows a fire tornado over Lake Keswick Estates near Redding, Calif., in July.

set up the spin that developed the fire tornado plume, Lareau said.

"These observations may help forecasters and scientists identify — and potentially warn — for future destructive fire-generated vortices," according to the study.

Lareau is an assistant profes-

sor in the Physics Department of the College of Science. The article was co-authored by Nicholas Nausler, of the Storm Prediction Center in Norman, Okla., and John Abatzoglou, of the Department of Geography at the University of Idaho in Moscow, Idaho.

NATION

Pa. town a haven for white supremacists

By GABRIEL POGRUND
The Washington Post

ULYSSES, Pa. — The traffic sign that greets visitors on the south side of Ulysses, a tiny town in rural far north-central Pennsylvania, is suitably quaint — a silhouette of a horse-drawn cart reminding drivers that the Amish use the roads, too.

But on the north side of town, along the main thoroughfare, is a far different display: a home dedicated to Adolf Hitler, where star-spangled banners and Nazi flags flutter side by side and wooden swastikas stand on poles.

White supremacy has had a continuous presence in Ulysses and surrounding Potter County since the Ku Klux Klan arrived a century ago, giving the town — with a population today of about 650 — improbable national significance. In the mid-2000s, it hosted the World Aryan Congress, a gathering of neo-Nazis, skinheads and Klan members.

This year, after a sting operation, federal prosecutors charged six members of an Aryan Strike Force cell with weapons and drug offenses, contending that they had plotted a suicide attack at an anti-racist protest. A terminally ill member was willing to take a bomb in his oxygen tank and to blow himself up, prosecutors said. The group had met and conducted weapons training in Ulysses.

Neo-Nazis and their opponents here say that white extremists have grown more confident — and confrontational — since the case of Donald Trump. Two months before the 2016 presidential election, the KKK established a “24 hour Klan Line” and sent goody bags containing lollipops and flyers to hundreds of homes. “You can sleep tonight knowing the Klan is awake,” the message read. A regional newspaper ran Klan advertisements saying, “God bless the KKK.”

Local police said the group had not been recruited openly in years.

Two weeks later, the area’s two neo-Nazi groups, the National Socialist Movement and Aryan Strike Force, held a “white unity meeting” in Ulysses to discuss their response to Trump and to plan joint action. One organizer would not say when the groups had met last, simply commenting, “It’s just a good time.”

Potter County is staunchly Republican and has voted Democratic once since 1888; Trump received 80 percent of the vote, tying with Herbert Hoover for the highest percentage won.

I can tell you with certainty that since November 2016, activity has doubled, whether it’s feet on the street or money orders or people helping out,” said Daniel Burnside, 43, a woodcarver who owns the Nazi-themed home and directs the state chapter of the National Socialist Movement. One right-wing group that was founded in Detroit in the mid-1970s. It has a presence in many states, according to the Southern Poverty Law Center, which tracks extremist groups, and the NSM was among the groups taking part in the violent August 2017 rally in defense of Confederate statues in Charlottesville, Va.

“We have meetings every 30 days,” he said. “There’s more collaboration.”

‘Still a white nation’

Burnside, who declined to say how many local residents were involved in his group, was born in Ulysses and was raised there

by a grandfather who he said was a Nazi sympathizer who fought in the U.S. Army in Europe during World War II. Burnside said his beloved grandfather drank himself to death because of the war’s impact on him.

The younger Burnside said he joined NSM four years ago but has long harbored anti-Semitic views and is a practicing Odinist — the pagan religion Odinism is popular among some neo-Nazis. Burnside does not see Trump as a leader of the NSM cause but as a politician who amplified long-standing white nationalist views at the right time.

“Personally, I don’t know about Trump,” he said. “You won’t necessarily see MAGA hats at an NSM meeting. We’re anti-Semitic. Something’s off about Trump with the Jews. That said, we’re strategically aligned. When Trump says something that aligns with us — close the borders, build the wall, look after your own — that’s good. We’ve been saying this for 25 years, but he has made it mainstream.”

“We’re still a white nation, and I respect that he supports that,” Burnside added. “He’s also highlighted social problems. The kids who go to bed hungry, people who can’t pay their bills, the damage being done to society.”

Joe Leschner, 38, a white restaurant manager, fled the county this year because of what he said was abuse aimed at him and his wife, Sasheena, who is black, after Trump’s election.

After he discovered a KKK leaflet outside their home, Leschner organized an anti-racism gathering in Ulysses. And these guys drove by us and gave the gun signal, like they’re gonna shoot us,” he said.

One of those who Leschner said made a pistol gesture had been jailed previously for 10 years for an aggravated assault on a black man. This year, he was convicted of possession of firearms he was not legally allowed to own and of having intent to sell drugs.

Photographs of the Leschners were circulated on VK, a Russian-run social media site, with users posting death threats, he said.

“A guy came up to us in a restaurant and said, ‘You have got to be kidding me. I wanted to say something, but just couldn’t. This was where I grew up, at the restaurant where I got my job call. My wife was almost in tears,’ he recalled.

“We had to leave,” said Leschner, who now runs a restaurant in Frederick, Md. “Most people aren’t racist, but there are enough of them and are enough who let it happen.”

‘Right conditions to thrive’

Kathleen Blee, who is a University of Pittsburgh history professor and an expert on white extremism, said Ulysses came to be a nexus of such thinking as like-minded residents gravitated to one another.

“Modern white extremism is different to the KKK in the 1920s or Nazi Germany in the 1930s. It is exclusively produced through small networks. It is not a mass movement,” she said. “It’s just one person recruiting another. Somebody knowing somebody. ... You get an extremist in an area, they attract other extremists.”

Ulysses’ most famous resident may have been August Kreis III, 63, a neo-Nazi from New Jersey who moved to town in the 1990s and left about 10 years ago. Kreis



PHOTOS BY BRETT CARLSEN/For The Washington Post

The home of Daniel Burnside in Ulysses, Pa., displays Nazi and other white supremacist symbology. NSM stands for the National Socialist Movement. The slogan “Free Tommy Robinson” refers to a British far-right figure jailed by a British judge in May for contempt of court.



Burnside is a woodcarver and a regional leader in the white supremacist National Socialist Movement.

made Ulysses the national headquarters of the Aryan Nations group and organized events such as the Aryan World Congress. In 2015, he was sentenced to 50 years in prison on a child molestation conviction.

Pennsylvania has 36 racial hate groups, more than Alabama, Arkansas or Kansas, according to the Southern Poverty Law Center.

“This area is well known for white supremacy. It’s got a rich history and the right conditions to thrive,” said Heidi Beirich of the SPLC. “It’s as significant as many areas in the South usually associated with white supremacy.”

Rural Appalachia, which includes Ulysses’ Potter County, has a wary attitude to outside forces — especially the state — that is often cited as a reason that anti-government militia groups and white extremists have prospered here. “There is also an extreme mind-your-own-business approach and a belief in individual rights,” Blee said.

‘A laid-back town’

Months before the Leschners fled the area, another controversy erupted after a sheriff’s deputy from a neighboring county entered Burnside’s front yard and confiscated a Nazi flag. Burnside called his local police force, demanding that the deputy return the flag and record a video apology.

When that did not happen, he went to state police and pursued a theft case. The 23-year-old deputy was forced to return the flag and to pay damages. Local police confirmed that he was suspended and left his position shortly after the trial’s conclusion.

Many locals suggested that they were more upset by the deputy’s actions than by the neo-Nazism. One man, an Army

veteran who spoke on the condition of anonymity out of fear of being branded a racist, said there was no comparison between World War II Nazis and Ulysses residents.

“World War II was a totally different time period. It’s part of history,” he said. “He can do what he wants. ... Everyone has their own thing.”

One day recently, Burnside, accompanied by a reporter, drove around town dressed in a shirt featuring Hitler’s face as the main design. None of the locals he chatted with objected to his attire.

City Council President Roy Hunt insisted that this reflected the town’s generous spirit.

“We’re a laid-back town, and we’re gonna be nice to everybody,” Hunt said. “I’ve known Danny for twenty years. If you were in a free town and you walked around with him, you’re right, he’ll be welcome in every store. ... If you’re nice, people will be nice to you 98 percent of the time.”

If he were to put something up that said kill all members of a race, in my opinion, that would be crossing the line, but he doesn’t have that sign up,” Hunt said.

Burnside said he serves the community. “I do fundraisers for American Legion with my artwork. Boys and Girls Clubs, regardless of race or ethnicity, I do fundraisers. ... The only way I can help white people is by helping everyone.”

Other residents disagree about the impact of the white supremacists’ presence. As he shopped among Burnside’s carved wooden bears and eagle sculptures, some of them signed with a swastika, Tom Lee, a road construction manager, said that he supports the First Amendment and that the Nazi presence “ain’t nothing to do with me. It’s a free country.”

“After a while, you’re not what you were anymore,” he added. “It is America out here, but not in the inner cities anymore.”

William Fish, 72, a carpenter, recalled as a child accompanying his mother as she delivered blankets and shoes to the shacks where black field workers lived.

“We’re not a racist town, but there are people who will turn a blind eye when they see racism happening. That’s why we have this history,” he said. “I think it has got worse since Trump. I honestly do. I also think our young people do not today share the same values as older people.”

Belinda Empson, 59, said it pained her that veterans in the Memorial Day parade had to march past Nazi signs.

“My grandson is 8 years old and he’s already asking about the Nazi flags,” said Empson, a retired waitress. “And I don’t want to explain to my grandson what it means, or what it’s about. We should have settled this stuff years ago.”

WORLD

Suicide car bombing kills 2 in Iran

By AMIR VAHDAT
Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran — A suicide car bomber struck a police headquarters in the Iranian port city of Chabahar on Thursday, killing at least two policemen and wounding 42 people, state TV reported. A little-known Sunni jihadi group claimed responsibility for the attack, which Iran's foreign minister accused of being "foreign-backed."

The bomber drove his vehicle, loaded with explosives, up to the police headquarters, provincial official Rahmehel Bameri told state TV. He said police officers blocked the vehicle and started firing at the driver, who then detonated the explosives.

State TV also aired footage of smoke rising over the city. The television report said two police officers were killed, lowering an earlier death toll of three without explanation.

Mohammad Mehran Aminifar, head of Medical Sciences University in Zahedan, the capital of southeastern Sistan and Baluchistan province, told state TV that 42 people were wounded, including four kids and a pregnant woman.

Ten of the wounded were mem-

bers of the police force, he said. In a communique, the Sunni jihadi group Ansar al-Furqan claimed responsibility for the attack, according to the Washington-based SITE Intelligence Group, which monitors extremist activity online.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif condemned the attack and warned "terrorists" that they will be punished. "Iran will bring terrorists and their masters to justice," he said on his Twitter account.

Ansar al-Furqan is known to operate in Sistan and Baluchistan province, which sees occasional attacks by Baluch separatists and drug traffickers. A year ago, the group claimed to have blown up an oil pipeline in Iran's southern Khuzestan province.

Chabahar, near Iran's border with Pakistan on the Sea of Oman, is home to a newly built port and is an economic free zone.

The attack comes as Iran's economy is reeling in the wake of the U.S. reimposing sanctions lifted under Tehran's nuclear deal with world powers. While Iran still complies with the accord, President Donald Trump withdrew America over the deal in May, in part due to Tehran's ballistic missile program, its in-



COURTESY OF THE TASNIM NEWS AGENCY/AP

The wreckage of a car is seen after a suicide car bombing at the gate of police headquarters in the southeastern Iranian port city of Chabahar on Thursday.

volvement in regional conflicts and its support of militant groups like the Lebanese Hezbollah.

While such incidents are rare, Iran has been targeted in recent years by militant attacks.

In September, gunmen disguised as soldiers opened fire on a military parade in Ahvaz, killing at least 24 people and wounding more than 60. Arab separatists and Islamic State both claimed the assault. Iran's

supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, blamed Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates for the attack, allegations denied by both countries.

A coordinated June 2017 ISIS assault on parliament and the shrine of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the leader of Iran's 1979 Islamic Revolution, killed at least 18 people and wounded more than 50.

SoftBank cell functions down for several hours in Japan

Associated Press

TOKYO — Some users of SoftBank cellphones had problems calling and text messaging for several hours in Japan on Thursday ahead of the company's IPO, which is set to be among the world's biggest at about \$21 billion.

The mobile service's problems started in the early afternoon and were gradually being fixed, according to SoftBank Corp. spokesman Naomasa Suzuki.

He said they were caused by a mechanical problem in SoftBank's 4G telecommunications systems. In some cases, the 3G network services automatically kicked in.

SoftBank is a top cell service provider in Japan, with some 40 million users.

The disruptions quickly became one of the trending topics on social media, and it was a major news item on public broadcaster NHK TV.

Some Japanese on Twitter said they were worried by no-signal notifications on their mobile phones and found the glitch inconvenient.

Fixed line services were not affected.

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WORLD



STINA STERNKVIST, TT NEWS AGENCY/AP

U.N. envoy to Yemen Martin Griffiths, second left, shakes hands Thursday with Yemeni delegates at the opening press conference of the Yemen peace talks at Johannesburg castle in Rimbo, Sweden

UN-sponsored peace talks for Yemen start in Sweden

By DAVID KEYTON
Associated Press

RIMBO, Sweden—Representatives from Yemen's warring sides sat in the same room in Sweden on Thursday as U.N.-sponsored peace talks for the war-torn Arab country got underway, aimed at halting a catastrophic three-year civil war.

Swedish Foreign Minister Margot Wallstrom opened the talks at a castle in Rimbo, a town north of Stockholm, wishing the Yemen adversaries strength to find "compromise and courage" as they embark on the difficult task ahead.

"Now it is up to you, the Yemeni parties," she said. "You have the command of your future."

U.N. envoy for Yemen Martin Griffiths said the coming days were a milestone and urged the parties not to "waver... let us work in good faith... to deliver a message of peace."

Griffiths announced the sides have agreed on a prisoner exchange as a first step toward building confidence. He said both sides have signaled they were serious about de-escalating the fighting through calls they've made in recent weeks, and he urged them to work to further reduce the violence in the Arab world's poorest nation, scene of massive civilians suffering.

"I'm also pleased to announce the signing of an agreement on the exchange of prisoners, detainees, the missing, the forcibly detained and individuals placed under house arrest," Griffiths said. "It will allow thousands of families to be reunited, and it is

the product of very effective, active work from both delegations."

U.N. officials, however, have sought to downplay expectations from the talks, saying they don't expect rapid progress toward a political settlement but hope for at least minor steps that would help to address Yemen's worsening humanitarian crisis.

Both the internationally recognized government, which is backed by a U.S.-sponsored and Saudi-led coalition, and the Iran-aligned Houthi rebels say they are striving for peace.

The Houthi delegation arrived in Stockholm late Tuesday, accompanied by Griffiths. The government delegation and the head of the rebel delegation traveled to Sweden on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, the U.N. food agency said Thursday it is planning to rapidly scale up food distribution to help another 4 million people in Yemen over the next two months, more than a 50 percent increase in the number reached now — if access can be maintained in the poor, war-stricken country.

World Food Program's spokesman Herve Verhoosel said the "ambitious undertaking" finalizes plans in the works in recent months to reach 12 million people with food and nutritional supplements through January, from between 7 million and 8 million now.

The target population includes some 3 million women and children who need special support to prevent malnutrition. Verhoosel said the rollout will require "safe, immediate and unimpeded access for food and other vital supplies."

Ukrainian foreign minister demands sailors' release

Associated Press

MILAN — Ukraine's foreign minister is demanding the release and safe return of 24 Ukrainian sailors captured by Russian military forces in the Black Sea.

Pavlo Klimkin told the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe on Thursday that even though Russia's annexation

of the Crimean Peninsula in 2014 has dominated the group's agenda for the past five years, Russia "has not pulled back."

Instead, he said, it has extended operations into the Black Sea, the Sea of Azov and the Kerch Strait.

Relations between Ukraine and Russia have been further strained following a Nov. 25 clash in which the Russian coast guard fired



ANTONIO CALANNI/AP

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Pavlo Klimkin arrives for the OSCE ministerial council meeting in Milan, Italy, on Thursday.

upon and seized three Ukrainian naval vessels and their crews.

The OSCE is holding a ministerial meeting in the Italian city of Milan.

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WORLD



Muroso/AP

Military personnel take care of an injured survivor of an attack by a separatist group in Papua province, Indonesia, upon arrival at the airport in Timika on Thursday.

17 bodies located after Papua attack

By ALFIAN KARTONO
Associated Press

JAYAPURA, Indonesia — Security forces have located the bodies of 16 civilians and a soldier who were killed in one of the bloodiest separatist attacks in Indonesia's restive Papua province, a military official said Thursday.

Army helicopters transported eight bodies and eight survivors, including a 4-year-old boy, from a remote mountainous village in Nduga district, Papua province military spokesman Col. Muhammad Aidi said. Gunfire between security forces and an armed group linked to the Free Papua Movement was hampering efforts to recover the eight other bodies, he said.

The area is a stronghold of separatists who have battled Indonesian rule in the impoverished region for half a century.

Police earlier said 31 workers and a soldier were killed Sunday when gunmen stormed a government construction project in a remote village in Nduga district, citing reports from witnesses.

Authorities on Wednesday revised the figure to 19 civilians, including workers, and a soldier, based on the accounts of survivors.

Security forces on Tuesday rescued 12 survivors, including five injured construction workers.

A forensic team at a hospital in the mountain mining town of Timika was determining whether the eight bodies were those of other construction workers employed by PT. Istaka Karya, a state-owned construction company, to build bridges on a section of the trans-Papua road network that will connect cities and districts in the province.

Indonesia's government, which for decades had a policy of sending Javanese and other Indonesians to settle in Papua, is now trying to spur economic development to dampen the separatist movement.

Indonesian President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo expressed his condolences to the families of the victims on Wednesday and ordered the military and police to arrest the perpetrators of the worst separatist attacks during his administration.

He said the attack would not dissuade his government from continuing to develop Papua, including the construction of the 2,875-mile trans-Papua road, which his administration has claimed was widely supported by local people.

Swedish police look for man in clown mask after scare

Associated Press

STOCKHOLM — Swedish police said they are searching for a man wearing a clown mask and a yellow outfit holding "something sharp" who scared an 8-year-old boy on his way to school, the latest incident involving adults in creepy outfits in the Scandinavian region.

Police spokesman Stefan Dangardt said a passing motorist saw what happened and honked his horn, enabling the boy to run

away.

Dangardt said the man also had red hair and a painted white face.

The incident happened Thursday in Kumla, about 105 miles west of Stockholm. The Aftonbladet newspaper said the man is believed to be in his 20s.

Two years ago, similar incidents were reported in Sweden, Norway and Denmark, leading a Norwegian toy store chain to stop selling clown costumes in its 114 shops.

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AMERICAN ROUNDUP

School may be renamed for interracial couple

VA ARLINGTON — A northern Virginia high school that is removing Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee's name could be renamed for an interracial couple.

A 21-member committee appointed by the Arlington County school board is recommending that Washington-Lee High School be renamed as Washington-Loving. The proposed new name would honor Mildred and Richard Loving, a Virginia couple whose legal challenge led the U.S. Supreme Court to strike down the state's law banning interracial marriage.

A second option proposed by the committee would be to rename the school Washington-Liberty.

The school board will discuss the proposed new names at a meeting Dec. 20.

Once-conjoined twins now heading home

FL APOPKA — Jesi and Remi Petri are coming home in separate car seats seven months after they were born conjoined at the belly.

The babies were born to Angi and Andre Petri on Mother's Day and have undergone seven surgeries at Gainesville's UP Shands Children's Hospital.

The Orlando Sentinel reported that Angi stayed in Gainesville while Andre and their two older children drove back and forth from their home in Apopka, near Orlando. Remi was discharged first, but stayed in Gainesville for routine checkups. Jesi had breathing complications but was discharged Monday.

Teacher placed on leave over KKK-themed jingle

NH DOVER — The teacher for a class in which students were videotaped singing about the Ku Klux Klan to the tune of "Jingle Bells" has been placed on paid administrative leave.

Dover Superintendent William Harbron told Foster's Daily Democrat Tuesday that putting John Carver on leave will allow school officials to fully investigate what happened.

Cellphone footage surfaced over the weekend of the students singing, "KKK, KKK, Let's kill all the blacks" in class at Dover High School.

Man admits urinating on cereal conveyor belt

TN MEMPHIS — A man faces up to three years in prison for urinating on a Kellogg's cereal conveyor belt at a Memphis facility.

News outlets reported Gregory Stanton, 49, pleaded guilty last month to tampering with consumer products. He was indicted by a grand jury in September.

Stanton worked for the plant in 2014 and posted a video online in 2016 of himself urinating on the conveyor belt. The video led the company to alert law enforcement.

THE CENSUS

\$100K

The value of layaway orders at a New Orleans Walmart that New Orleans Saints and Pelicans owner Gayle Benson, right, paid off. News outlets reported Tuesday that Benson has paid off more than 400 orders at the Tchoupitoulas Street store. Benson became the sole owner of both teams when her husband, Tom Benson, died in March.



CHARLIE RIEDEL/AP

Craning to see the sunset

Cranes at the Port of Gulfport, Miss., are silhouetted by the setting sun Sunday.

Woman reunited with urn with mother's ashes

AZ SIERRA VISTA — Cochise County sheriff's officials said a woman has been reunited with her mother's ashes after the father of her child threw the urn into the street.

Sheriff's spokeswoman Carol Capas said Tuesday that investigators located the urn's owner after receiving a tip.

The woman told deputies the couple had gotten into an argument and the man had kicked her out of the home and kept all of her belongings. She said he later called and said she could "find her mother in the middle of 'Nevada.'"

The woman says she went to search for the urn but by then deputies had picked it up near Nevada and Arabian drives in Sierra Vista.

Fifth-grade class finds body outside school

OH AKRON — Officials said a fifth-grade class

found a body outside an Ohio school.

The Akron Beacon Journal reported school officials said in a letter to parents the class found the body Monday morning at the Bridges Learning Center in Akron.

Principal Stephanie Davis said classes in the area were immediately moved, and students saw very little of the scene.

Police believe the man died by suicide two days earlier, and a gun was recovered at the scene. An autopsy was scheduled.

School officials said counseling is being offered to students. The school serves students in grades K-8 with emotional or behavioral needs.

Plane reported to have harassed herd of elk

CO GRAND JUNCTION — Colorado wildlife officials said they are investigating reports that a small, single-engine aircraft harassed a herd of elk in the north-central portion of the state.

The Daily Sentinel in Grand

Junction reported that witnesses told authorities they saw the aircraft make two low passes over the herd near the community of Craig, causing the animals to scatter.

The witnesses described the aircraft as either white or yellow and possibly a Cirrus SR22 or a Piper Cherokee.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife spokesman Mike Porras said it's illegal to use an aircraft to harass wildlife or as an aid in hunting.

Mom charged after car taken with baby inside

NY BUFFALO — Police in Buffalo said the mother of a baby found inside a stolen car will face charges alongside the 15-year-old boy and 18-year-old accused of stealing the vehicle.

Capt. Jeff Rinaldo said the 25-year-old woman was charged with endangering the welfare of a child. Officials said she had left the car running outside a liquor store when it was stolen Saturday with her 2-month-old infant still inside.

Rinaldo said the two suspects are in custody for stealing the ve-

hicle. Police said afterward one of the suspects took the baby to a hospital in the city of Niagara Falls, 15 miles north of Buffalo.

Police said they've connected the two suspects to an armed robbery the day before.

Co-workers, dealer replace stolen car

LA LAFAYETTE — When a restaurant dishwasher's car was stolen, his co-workers pitched in to buy a replacement.

Restaurant manager Chris Muffoletto told The Advertiser that Kea Senegal had saved for months to buy the car. News outlets reported it was stolen just before Thanksgiving from the restaurant parking lot in Lafayette.

Muffoletto said he asked the staff at Ruffino's on the River last week if they'd help. They raised \$2,500 in three days. Muffoletto said a used-car dealer, Don's Wholesale Automotive, heard about what they were doing and matched the donations.

Senegal was given a 2015 Chevrolet Malibu.

From wire reports

BUSINESS/WEATHER

Documents detail how Facebook used user data

By DANICA KIRKA, FRANK BAJAK and BARBARA ORTUTAY
Associated Press

Internal Facebook documents released by a U.K. parliamentary committee offer the clearest evidence yet that the social network has used its enormous trove of user data as a competitive weapon, often in ways designed to keep its users in the dark.

Parliament's media committee accused Facebook on Wednesday of using spy devices to give more access to data while icing out others that it viewed as potential rivals.

In other documents, company executives discussed how they were keeping the company's collection and exploitation of user data from its users. That included quietly collecting the call records and text messages of users of phones that run on Google's Android operating system without asking their permission.

The U.K. committee released more than 200 pages of documents on the tech giant's internal discussions about the value of users' personal information. While they mostly cover the period between 2012 and 2015 — the first three years after Facebook went public — they offer a rare glimpse into the company's inner workings and the extent to which it used people's data to make money while publicly vowing to protect their privacy.

The company's critics said the new revelations reinforced their concerns over what users actually know about how Facebook treats their data.

"These kinds of schemes are exactly why companies must be required to disclose exactly how they are collecting and sharing our data, with stiff penalties for

companies that lie about it," Sen. Ron Wyden, an Oregon Democrat, said in a statement.

Facebook called the documents misleading and said the information they contain is "only part of the story."

"Like any business, we had many internal conversations about the various ways we could build a sustainable business model for our platform," the company said in a statement. "But the facts are clear: We've never sold people's data."

In a Facebook post, company CEO Mark Zuckerberg sought to put the documents in context. "Of course, we don't let everyone develop on our platform," he wrote. "We blocked a lot of sketchy apps. We also didn't allow developers to use our platform to replicate our functionality or grow their businesses virally in a way that creates little value for people on Facebook."

The U.K. committee seized the documents from app developer Six4Three, maker of a now-defunct bikini picture search app. Six4Three acquired the files as part of a U.S. lawsuit that accuses Facebook of deceptive, anti-competitive business practices. The documents remain under court seal in the U.S.

In a summary of key issues

pertaining to the documents, the committee said Facebook "whitelisted," or made exceptions for companies such as Airbnb and Netflix that gave them continued access to users' "friends" even after the tech giant announced changes in 2015 to end the practice.

"Facebook have clearly entered into whitelisting agreements with certain companies, which meant that after the platform changes in 2014/15 they maintained full access to friends data," the committee said in a statement. "It is not clear that there was any user consent for this, nor how Facebook decided which companies should be whitelisted or not."

The documents "raise important questions about how Facebook treats users' data, their policies for working with app developers, and how they exercise their dominant position in the social media market," said committee chair Damian Collins.

"We don't feel we have had straight answers from Facebook on these important issues, which is why we are releasing the documents."

The cache includes emails from Zuckerberg and other key members of his staff. The emails show Zuckerberg and other executives scheming to leverage user data to

favor companies not considered to be threats and to identify potential acquisitions.

Collins said the emails raise important issues, particularly around the use of the data of Facebook users. "The idea of linking access to friends' data to the financial value of the developers' relationship with Facebook is a recurring feature of the documents," Collins said.

The committee's summary said Facebook collected data about the mobile apps its users favored to help it decide which companies to acquire. It also said Facebook knew that an update to its Android mobile app phone system — which allowed the Facebook app to hover up user call logs and text messages — would be controversial.

"To mitigate any bad PR, Facebook planned to make it as hard as possible for users to know this was one of the underlying features of the upgrade of their app," the summary said.

In a post Wednesday, Facebook continued to stand by its stance that the feature "is opt in for users and we ask for people's permission before enabling."

Facebook executives clearly understand the material is valuable. An unsigned memo setting policy for a system upgrade

known as "Platform 3.0" laid out a case for shutting out any app developer who could be construed as a competitor.

"There are a small number of developers whom no amount of sharing to FB or monetary value can justify giving them access to 'Platform,'" the memo said. "These developers do not want to participate in the ecosystem we have created, but rather build their own ecosystem at the expense of our users, other developers and, of course, us. That is something that we will not allow."

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	
Euro cents (Dec. 7)	\$1.1652
Dollar buys (Dec. 7)	69.8582
British pound (Dec. 7)	\$1.31
Japanese yen (Dec. 7)	110.00
South Korean won (Dec. 7)	1,089.00
Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3769
British pound	\$1.2774
Canada (Dollar)	1.3409
China (Yuan)	6.8814
Denmark (Krone)	6.5507
Egypt (Pound)	17.9101
Euro	\$1.1393/0.8777
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.8122
Hungary (Forint)	233.93
Israel (Shekel)	7.3737
Japan (Yen)	112.35
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.3042
Norway (Krone)	8.5212
Philippines (Peso)	52.81
Poland (Zloty)	3.76
Saudi (Riyal)	3.7523
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3691
South Korea (Won)	1,121.14
Switzerland (Franc)	0.9910
Thailand (Baht)	32.81
Turkey (Lira)	5.3628

(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance. For Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, for nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), check with your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)

INTEREST RATES

Prime rate	5.25
Discount rate	2.75
Federal funds market rate	2.20
3-month bill	2.365
30-year bond	3.16

EUROPE GAS PRICES

Country	Super E10	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel
Germany	\$2.944	\$3.149	\$3.385	\$3.544
Change in price	+7.4 cents	-8.2 cents	-8.4 cents	+1.7 cents
Netherlands	...	\$3.309	\$3.545	\$3.763
Change in price	...	-8.2 cents	-8.4 cents	-5.9 cents
U.K.	...	\$3.803	\$3.319	\$3.407
Change in price	...	-8.2 cents	-8.4 cents	-5.4 cents
Azores	\$3.306	...
Change in price	-8.4 cents	...
Belgium	...	\$2.629	\$2.843	\$3.252
Change in price	...	-5.2 cents	-5.6 cents	-1.8 cents
Turkey	\$4.453	\$3.297
Change in price	No change	-5.4 cents
Italy	...	\$4.127	...	\$4.354
Change in price	...	No change	...	+15.2 cents

PACIFIC GAS PRICES

Country	Unleaded	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel
Japan	...	\$3.169	...	\$3.259
Change in price	...	-8.0 cents	...	-5.0 cents
Okunawa	...	\$2.499	...	\$3.259
Change in price	...	-9.0 cents	...	-5.0 cents
South Korea	...	\$2.539	...	\$3.209
Change in price	...	-9.0 cents	...	-8.0 cents
Guam	...	\$2.519*	\$2.959	\$3.189
Change in price	...	-9.0 cents	-8.0 cents	-9.0 cents

* Diesel EFD # Midgrade
For the week of Dec. 8-14

WEATHER OUTLOOK

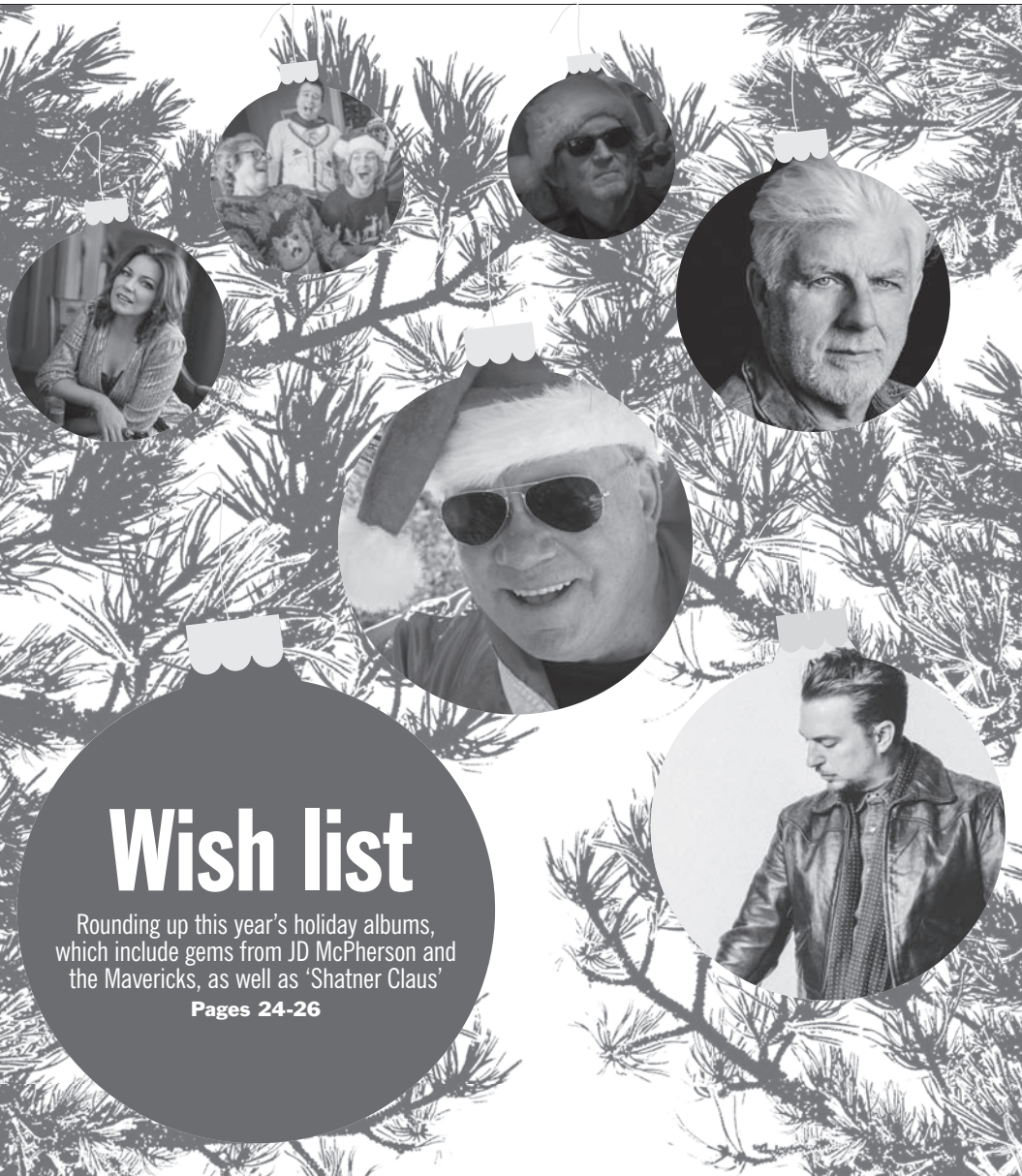


The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

WEEKEND



Julia
Roberts
Page 36



Wish list

Rounding up this year's holiday albums, which include gems from JD McPherson and the Mavericks, as well as 'Shatner Claus'

Pages 24-26

WEEKEND: GADGETS & CHARTS



DANIEL GARDE, THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS/TNS

Forklift driver Gerry Giddings looks for an item at the Liquidity Services warehouse Nov. 7 in Garland, Texas. Returned electronics often end up at liquidation services — even sometimes goods that were never used.

Liquidators make holidays merry for retailers, unboxers

By DANA BRANHAM
The Dallas Morning News

Turns out that retailers like Amazon aren't too interested in restocking your returned impulse buys. Instead, they'll often wind up in warehouses like one in Garland, Texas, where returned goods (including some that have never been opened) are auctioned off for cheap.

As holiday sales pick up, so do returns. The end of November marks the beginning of busy season for people who work in returns management, so the Garland warehouse where Liquidation.com sorts, packages and auctions off returned goods will kick into high gear through the new year.

There's a "Christmas effect" that comes with shopping at the warehouse, manager Scott Birlaw said.

Liquidation.com has contracts with companies like Amazon, The Home Depot, Bed Bath & Beyond and plenty of others, so what gets returned to those businesses can end up bundled in "mystery"

boxes and pallets, where items are grouped and sold off for much less than their normal retail prices.

"You don't know what you're going to get, and you're pretty sure there's something there you're going to like," Birlaw said. "You just don't know what it is yet."

That mystique of the return bundle has inspired a niche genre of YouTube videos, in which vloggers and professional resellers buy pallets of returned goods and open them in videos.

YouTube Frank Passalacqua, who makes tech-focused videos as randomfrank, posted a video in August titled: "I Paid \$250 for \$1,932 Worth of MYSTERY TECH! Amazon Returns Pallet Unboxing!"

In it, he takes out each item one by one. Among the gems in the boxes: a pair of wireless headphones that normally sell online for about \$328, which is more than he paid for the whole lot.

But of course, the bundles aren't without their duds. YouTube Safiya Nygaard bid on a health and beauty-themed mystery pallet that included a few hair-removal items

and some hair stylers, among a slew of other unexpected items in the lot. In her video, she tested out each product. Some didn't work, and others were clearly used, like an electric razor with hairs stuck in the blades.

At the Liquidation.com warehouse in Garland, one of the company's five warehouse locations in North America, staffers sift through boxes of returned items, sorting trash from treasure.

Each day, anywhere between two and 20 trucks drop off loads of goods that other retailers don't want to deal with. The majority of the items are returns, but there are also shelf pulls — new items that a company had too much of, or items that have since been overshadowed by a newer version — as well as salvaged items.

Last holiday season, 28 percent of gifts purchased ended up being returned, creating a huge influx of supply for Liquidation, Birlaw said. This year, it's gearing up for even more returns, which creates a treasure trove for customers.

"The increase in supply from our sellers creates a gold mine of inventory for our buyers, and of course at great prices," he said.

On a recent Wednesday at the warehouse, the building housed boxes of food among mattresses, kayaks, 4K TVs and various home appliances. Some were already sold and waiting on customers to come pick them up, and others had yet to be auctioned off.

When truckloads of stuff arrive at the warehouse, it's sorted into categories so it can be auctioned off with similar items. If products are damaged, staff will decide whether it makes economic sense to refurbish them, strip them for parts or discard them.

In the refurb department, technicians test products — like speakers and headphones — clean them, and fix them with donor parts or parts that they purchase. That way, they can be sold at a higher price.

Customers bid online for what they want, and if they place a winning bid, they can either have it shipped to them or they can set up a time to pick it up themselves, to save on shipping costs.

GADGET WATCH

Earbuds you'll want to hear more about

By GREGG ELLMAN
Tribune News Service

Earbuds. You want them, but the choices are endless. If you go to Amazon and type earbuds into a search, there are more than 20,000 results. So if you have the time to read about each one, go for it. Otherwise, here are a few options.

V-Moda just launched the **BassFit**, the company's first fitness-focused Bluetooth in-ear headphone, which they referred to as "The Ultimate Sport Headphone Companion" in a recent press release.

Just about everyone shops for earbuds with sound in mind. In the BassFit, your ears will be treated to perfectly tuned bass and pristine clarity.

V-Moda went all out to ensure great sound along with features to keep the earbuds in place during any workout, or while just listening along at 32,000 feet in the air.

The BassFit features V-Moda's patent-pending TriFit design to give users comfort and the perfect fit. They can be worn as traditional earbuds, with eight sizes of ear tips to choose from to get the right fit. In addition, you can add ear fins (three sets), ear hooks or a combination of both.

Battery life will provide more than 11 hours of playing until a charge is needed. A 15-minute fast charge will give you about 2½ hours of playback.

With two-layer nanocoating technology, V-Moda calls it competition-crushing sweat and weather resistance.

An inline three-button control handles music, volume, hands-free calls and accessing voice assistants.

Each earbud has a magnetic closure for securing the earbuds together around your neck when they aren't playing your tunes. Or just store them in the included soft pouch.

Online: V-Moda.com; \$130, available in black or white



CREATIVE/TNS

Creative's Aurvana Trio wired earbuds

Creative's Aurvana Trio wired earbuds with Hybrid Triple-Driver System deliver detailed highs, natural vocals and accurate bass, which pump pristine, accurate sound in your ears.

Technology is great, but what's important is how it sounds, and it was impressive at any volume level on every song from my eclectic playlist.

You get four sets of silicone ear tips. When you find the ones that fit best, you will take advantage of the earbuds' AuraSeal Design. This gives you up to 98 percent noise isolation out of the stylish and well-built earbuds with a gunmetal finish.

A great feature is the thin detachable braided MMCX connector 3.9-foot cable, making it easy to replace in the event of damage or if you prefer to use a specialized aftermarket cable.

If you have never used a detachable cable on earbuds, you'll love this one. It connects easily, stays intact and swivels as needed. The braided design minimizes tangles. The cable has a one-button control for music, power, volume and calls.

A hard travel case and airplane travel adapter are included.

Online: us.creative.com; \$99.99

I'll give a shout-out to Funcl, a new company comprised of experienced sound professionals who have introduced two models of true wireless sound solutions on Indiegogo.

They gave me a sneak peek at both, and I was very impressed with the sound, features and affordable prices.

Funcl AI (\$54.99) is powered by Bluetooth 5.0 touch control and has Hi-Fi sound quality. The product resembles AirPods and has a 6½-hour battery life. Charging and storage are done in the included hard battery case, which will give you up to three extra charges.

The smaller-profile **Funcl W1** has the look of a traditional earbud, without the wire. It's priced at \$19.99 and features Bluetooth 5.0 and touch control. The buds have a 4.5-hour battery life and can get an additional 18 hours from the charging/storage case.

Both are available in black or white and are IPX5 waterproof-rated. To find out more, go to indiegogo.com and search for Funcl.



FUNCL/TNS

The Funcl W1 has the look of a traditional earbud, but no wires.

ON THE COVER: Another holiday season brings another fresh crop of festive albums from many musical genres.

Courtesy of the labels

WEEKEND

CHECK IT OUT

Events, entertainment and other ways to fill your free time

1

Don't call Roberts' film a comeback

Julia Roberts, who has been an A-list actress since 1990's "Pretty Woman," says she hasn't gone anywhere. Roberts doesn't pump out several leading roles a year — in fact, she says she doesn't understand how other actresses manage — but she seems to have mastered the balancing act of being a wife and a working mom to three kids.

The actress puts that experience to good use in her latest film, "Ben Is Back." She plays a mom whose Christmas wish is to have her son, played by Lucas Hedges, home with her for the holiday. Unfortunately, he's dealing with a pretty serious drug addiction, which makes things complicated.

Roberts talks about her on-screen roles, her family, California wildfires and her approach to acting.

• Profile, review on Pages 36-37.



EVAN AGOSTINI, INVISION/AP

Actors Julia Roberts, left, and Lucas Hedges star in "Ben Is Back" (inset photo from movie).

2

Something old and new from holiday albums

Christmas music is easy to find — and hard to escape — this time of year. Each December brings a new batch of seasonal songs from artists that represent multiple genres. Instead of listening to the same tracks you've heard since Rudolph was being excluded from the reindeer games, check out the Los Angeles Times' rankings of this year's most interesting new albums and give one a try.

• Christmas music stories on Pages 24-26.



3

'Battlefield V' takes the action back to WWII

The many iterations of the Battlefield video game franchise have established it as the king of large-scale combat, offering war gaming experiences like no other. "Battlefield V" returns to the familiar environs of World War II, and again provides an online multiplayer mode and a single-player War Stories mode. It's got some rough edges, but new content is always welcome.

• "Battlefield V" review on Page 34.



4

Pump up your photos with editing software

It's probably safe to assume that most folks take photos when they travel. Whether your pics are to help you remember everything you saw in the most beautiful way possible, or to make your friends on social media as envious as possible, we all want our travel photos to look great. Photo editing can be intimidating, but there are many apps and tips that can help photographers of all skill levels. Those who prefer expensive cameras as well as those who are happy making the most of their smartphone features can find help here.

• More about photo editing on Page 30.

WEEKEND: MUSIC

Holiday highlights



John Legend

COLUMBIA RECORDS/TNS

This year's essential Christmas albums ranked, from 'Shatner Claus' to the irresistible JD McPherson

BY RANDY LEWIS
Los Angeles Times

The spirit of inspiration runs stronger than usual through this year's batch of holiday music collections, with fresh melodies and lyrics in some of the best. Veteran country singer-songwriter Rodney Crowell, Oklahoma recent arrival JD McPherson, the long-running Nashville-based genre-defying band the Mavericks and Texas' barnstorming Old 97's each have delivered Christmas albums built around inviting new songs that make them worthy additions to the favorites you might turn to year in and year out. Albums, listed alphabetically by artist, are ranked on a scale of one star (poor) to four stars (classic). Let the roundup begin:

David Archuleta

"Winter in the Air"
(Shadow Mountain)

★★

There will always be an audience for an angelic tenor voice singing songs of the season, as the "American Idol" alum demonstrates on his second Christmas album. The selections tend toward contemporary Christian over time-honored carols, but he finds room for both, along with a couple of honorable originals he co-wrote with different collaborators. The haunting arrangement of "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" borders on horror-movie territory, but for the most part he celebrates innocence and purity of spirit.

Paul Cardall

"Christmas"
(Stone Angel Music)

★★★

The pianist, composer and arranger has long been a force in Christian music circles, which seems an ideal launching point into this Christmas album. His approach favors power, glory and elegance in the predominantly instrumental arrangements of tunes familiar and new. Three featured vocals come from guests CeCe Winans, Patrice Tipoki and Audrey Assad.

Eric Clapton

"Happy Xmas"
(Bushbranch Records/Surfdog)

★★★

Of course, Slowhand takes on Charles Brown's "Merry Christmas, Baby," probably the bluestiest seasonal song ever — and wrings every ounce of melancholy from it. The pleasant surprise is the balance between his blues and adult pop instincts that's broad enough to include a fascinating disco-rock meeting-of-the-minds rendering of "Jingle Bells" and his canny interpretations of "White Christmas" and "Away in a Manger," along with one original, "Christmas Tears."

Courtesy of
New West Records



Rodney Crowell

"Christmas Everywhere"
(New West)

★★★

One of Americana music's most astute singer-songwriters applies his well-honed wit and observational prowess to a dozen original songs that mine the full spectrum of emotions that go with the season like tinsel and garland, coal and stockings. Healthy doses of humor sit side-by-side with sincerity in this smartly conceived, engagingly executed holiday song cycle.

John Legend

"A Legendary Christmas"
(Columbia)

★★★

The R&B-pop singer-songwriter finds a way to bring urban music sensibility even to something as quintessentially foursquare as "Silver Bells." Mixed among the chestnuts, he's also written or co-written a handful of seasonal originals; a couple feel more like embellished riffing than future holiday classics, though the attempts are sincere. To amp up the star power even more, he's enlisted Stevie Wonder and Esperanza Spalding as guest singers.

Mike Love

"Reason for the Season"
(Meleco)

★★★

The Beach Boys co-founder engages his current lineup of the long-running group for a session that includes a new rendition of "Little St. Nick," which departs little from the original except for the absence of any Wilson voices. Points for attempting some original tunes to flesh out the carols and pop standards, although none seem destined to become evergreens.

The Mavericks

"Hey! Merry Christmas!"
(Mono Mundo)

★★★

It's hard to think of an act with an essential joie de vivre better suited to the joyful spirit of the holidays than the Mavericks. The Nashville-based, label-defying group has cooked up eight effervescent originals and added its stamp to a couple of Yuletide chestnuts: "Christmas (Baby Please Come Home)" in a performance that doesn't instantly make you yearn for the original, and Irving Berlin's second best-known song of the season, "Happy Holiday." Lead singer nonpareil Raul Malo delivers one of the most unabashedly romantic vocals on "Christmas for Me (Is You)." Boogie-woogie, Tex-Mex, heart-melting pop, retro blues — it's all here in one irresistible package.



Martina
McBride
Courtesy of
Red Light
Management

Martina McBride

"It's the Holiday Season"
(BBR/BMG)

★★★

The country singer with the titanium pipes goes old-school yule with big band/orchestral arrangements by Patrick Williams in keeping with the stuff Sinatra and Dean Martin used to do for the holidays. There's a lot of swing in the nine-song set and, for better or worse, no surprises in the song selection, which emphasizes the war horses over lesser-trod turf. Her delivery, as usual, is impeccable.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 25

WEEKEND: MUSIC

Michael McDonald

"Season of Peace — the Christmas Collection"
(Chonin/BMG)

★★

The blue-eyed soul singer leans on the gospel side of the holiday musical tradition with this collection. But there are times here where he puts so much effort into pushing his soul-R&B chops that he sounds uncomfortably close to someone with a foot caught in the fireplace flue. This one's for those who prefer their holiday music on the slow-jam end of the spectrum.

Courtesy of
Sacks & Co.

**JD McPherson**

"Socks — A Christmas Album"
(New West)

★★★★

The roots-rocking singer-songwriter from Broken Arrow, Okla., has put together the kind of holiday album that Louis Prima or Roy Brown would have if they'd ever gotten around to it, and thank Santa for that. It's an utter joy, a vintage jump-blues/R&B/rockabilly workout devoid of treacly sentiment, but brimming over with childlike spirit — and just enough grown-up skepticism ("Bad Kid," the title track) to keep things anchored in reality. He's written or co-written 11 originals that bring welcome fresh blood into the holiday music canon. Producing the album themselves, he and the band also zero in on a perfectly period musical and sonic vibe for this outing.

Courtesy of
Sacks & Co.

Memphis Ukulele Band

"Holidays Ain't the Same"
(Memphis International/Phillips)

★★½

The low-fi, low-key quality of this seven-song EP — produced by Sam Phillips' granddaughter Halley Phillips — is a welcome antidote to the pull-out-the-stops approach to so many holiday recordings. Voicings of the arrangements among the family of standard ukes along with tenor, baritone and bass ukuleles also provides a nice sonic change of pace. Among the three main singers, Kyndle McMahan is the most affecting. And yes, "Mele Kalikimaka" is one of the three covers interspersed among four modest holiday originals.

The Monkees

"Christmas Party"
(Rhino)

★★½

Carrying on the spirit of the group's 2016 outing "Good Times!," surviving members Micky Dolenz, Michael Nesmith and Peter York turn in latter-day performances of a blend of originals written by Monkees fans, including Weezer's Rivers Cuomo, R.E.M.'s Peter Buck, XTC's Andy Partridge and choice covers including Alex Chilton's "Jesus Christ" and Roy Wood's "I Wish It Could Be Christmas Every Day." Nesmith brings grown-up emotion to his recordings of Mel Tormé and Robert Wells' "The Christmas Song" and Claude & Ruth Thornhill's rarely recorded "Snowfall." But the big calling card might well be two vocals that Davy Jones recorded in 1991 and that are newly outfitted in fresh instrumental accompaniment pulled together by album producer Adam Schlesinger.



Old 97's

Courtesy of Big Hassle Media

Old 97's

"Love the Holidays"
(ATO)

★★★★

A quarter century into its career, the Texas-based alt-country band embraces the spirit of the season with nine originals written or co-written by frontman Rhett Miller and his band mates for this generous 14-song collection. It's rare to find someone with something new to say about the holiday experience, but the 97's pull it off so well in that the five yuletide standards that follow almost feel anti-climatic.

Pentatonix

"Christmas Is Here!"
(RCA)

★★½

The a cappella ensemble's third holiday release in a span of barely five years strongly suggests the group is embracing the adage, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." They've chosen another mix of traditional carols, secular classics and original material, from straight-ahead pop to light jazz, R&B, a smidge of hip-hop and, perhaps the most pleasant surprise, a vocal rendering of Tchaikovsky's "Waltz of the Flowers" from "The Nutcracker." Some listeners might find the meticulous arrangements a tad sterile by the end, but Danny Elfman's "Making Christmas" brings a welcome bit of edge to the project.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26

WEEKEND: MUSIC

FROM PAGE 25

Mitch Ryder

"Christmas (Take a Ride)"
(Goldenlane)

★★

Detroit's "Devil With a Blue Dress" rocker has lost some of the vocal focus he had in his heyday half a century back, which renders some of the gentler tunes in this collection of largely familiar yuletide tunes rather wobbly. He's better served on the more driving arrangements and, not surprisingly, makes nods to the Spector-cum-Springsteen holiday tradition in his renditions of "Santa Claus Is Coming to Town" and "Christmas (Baby Please Come Home)."

William Shatner

"Shatner Claus"
(Cleopatra)

★★★

No need to feel guilty over the pleasures in the famously histrionic actor's readings of more than a dozen holiday tunes, the majority featuring guest collaborators from punk rockers Iggy Pop and Henry Rollins to country star Brad Paisley, folk veteran Judy Collins and prog-rock luminaries Rick Wakeman and Ian Anderson. He's honed in on narrative songs that are well suited to a spoken delivery out of the Robert Preston-Rex Harrison-Richard Harris school of nonsinging actors. A delightfully dramatic outing.

Whitehorse

"A Whitehorse Winter Classic"
(Six Shooter)

★★½

This Canadian indie duo joins the ranks of those who put some extra thought into their holiday offering with several originals sharing space with the rock 'n' roll-friendly likes of the Pretenders' "2000 Miles," "Blue Christmas" and "Merry Christmas, Baby." The low-fi spirit's in keeping with the theme of humility in the Christmas story.

Chely Wright

"Santa Will Find You!"
(Painted Red Music Group)

★★½

Wright wrote a couple of the more charming additions to the holiday canon in recent years, the title track and "It Really Is (A Wonderful Life)," both of which Mandy Smith beat the composer to the punch in recording for Smith's 2007 "My Holiday" collection (well worth seeking out). The country singer-songwriter's versions are comparably sweet and wistful. They share space with four other Wright holiday originals, among them "Christmas Isn't Christmas Time," which pays homage to the classic Phil Spector Christmas album by borrowing the "Be My Baby" back beat, Wall of Sound production (on the second of two takes) and giving her lyric the full Ronnie Spector vocal treatment. This one should satisfy the adult music fan looking for a new adult pop/light jazz holiday outing.



Shatner boldly goes ... into holiday music

BY RANDY LEWIS
Los Angeles Times

Who'd have guessed more than 50 years ago when actor William Shatner brought Capt. James T. Kirk so vividly to life and helped turn "Star Trek" into a cultural touchstone that the show's famous "final frontier" might turn out to be ... Christmas music?

We kid you not: The veteran actor, 87, has just released an album of yuletide classics: "Shatner Claus — The Christmas Album," for which he's joined by a galaxy of pop, rock, country and other stars of contemporary music. Proto-punk rocker Iggy Pop, folk-pop queen Judy Collins, country singer-songwriter-guitarist Brad Paisley, Jethro Tull flutist Ian Anderson, prog-rock keyboard wiz Rick Wakeman and ZZ Top guitar hero Billy Gibbons are among the baker's dozen guest collaborators.

"Every song — good or bad — has my interpretation with the desire to bend it a little or fulfill more fully its original desire," Shatner said.

That's his way of pointing out that, rather than simply stepping into a studio and reciting lyrics over prepared backing tracks to seasonal favorites such as "Jingle Bells," "Feliz Navidad," "White Christmas" and "Winter Wonderland," Shatner worked closely with album producers Adam Hamilton and Jurgen Engler in applying his vision of how each number ought to play out.

"Jingle Bells," for instance, which starts the album at a breakneck pace as Shatner almost hyperventilates as he relays the song's lyric.

"How do you do 'Jingle Bells' differently?" he said. "I thought, 'What happens if the horses are running off? There are two guys on the sled and the horses are running off. I've been on runoff horses, and you don't stop them — you just guide them. So for my version, the horses take off.' When he listened back initially, 'I said, 'That's not quite right. Let's put [the sound of] some hoof beats on it.'"

The result is in keeping with his previous cult-classic recordings featuring his often hyper-dramatic style of spoken-word recitation. Those date to his 1968 debut album, "Transformed Man," which included his camp-classic renditions of Bob Dylan's "Mr. Tambourine Man" and the Beatles' "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds." In recent years he's also recorded collaborations with indie rock singer-songwriter Ben Folds ("Has Been" in 2004) and the prog-rock effort "Ponder the Mystery" in 2013.

"This album reflects my continuing desire to fuse words and music, because I can't sustain a note," he said, a musical limitation that aligns him with nonsinging actors who've taken on musical projects including Rex Harrison ("My Fair Lady"), Robert Preston ("The Music Man"), and Richard

“This album reflects my continuing desire to fuse words and music, because I can't sustain a note.”

William Shatner

actor, and sometimes recording artist, on his new album, "Shatner Claus"

Burton and Richard Harris ("Camelot").

"I'm looking at this album as the culmination of this [longtime] yearning to make music and to try to do it the only way I know how," Shatner said.

His partners on each track help elevate the musical content — Paisley adding his fel electric guitar to their version of "Blue Christmas," Gibbons doing likewise on "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" and Collins singing sweetly against him for "White Christmas."

The diversity of those collaborators shows the reach of his ever-expanding fan base.

"It's the highest compliment possible when somebody will take their precious time and lend their talents to a track, a song I'm trying to do," he said. "I've been emotionally moved by these talents that have

said, 'I'll give you something more precious than money — my time.'"

The song Shatner considers to be the album's centerpiece is a new one, "One For You, One For Me," which sets to music a poem written by Blades Anthony, a U.S. military veteran who served in Afghanistan, and wrote poetry about his experiences there.

"That poem anchors the album," Shatner said. "I met Blades Anthony, a veteran who had been very disturbed by a battle he was involved in in Afghanistan. He showed by a sheaf of poems about the tragedy of that battle. I asked him to write me a Christmas poem, and he came up with 'One for You, One for Me,' about all the soldiers in Afghanistan wondering what Christmas is like for the people back home.

"I took it to them [Hamilton and Engler] and said, 'Let's put music to this.' It took quite a few changes from me as listener and director. There's not enough military feeling here, not enough pathos in that part.' The music evolved from me as an actor and director."

The idea that Christmas music might represent for him the final frontier of which he spoke in such sober tones back when "Star Trek" visited TV screens weekly made him chuckle. But as Paisley noted, he continues to go boldly where no iconic Star Fleet captains have gone before.

"I'm going to work with Adam on a blues album," he said. "I'm trying to meet up with several of the ranking blues [musicians], and even if they don't want to be part of the album, I want them to at least talk to me about the blues. We all know it comes from the church and from the black experience."

"I understand the feelings of anguish, of sorrow and pain, and I know how to express that, but I haven't done it in this form as yet. It's a challenge to take on this great medium that has such a range of performers from B.B. King, Aretha Franklin and all these others. Rock 'n' roll has blues numbers in it; heavy metal, too. I want to include all that."

We can almost hear it now, in Shatner's inimitable voice: "I ... woke up this ... morning ... got myself ... a beer!"

WEEKEND: QUICK TRIPS

Europe



The Goldene Waage or Golden Scale was a renaissance half-timbered house before being destroyed in World War II. This is its reconstruction in Frankfurt, Germany's, new Old Town.

Photos by Michael Abrams/Stars and Stripes



Frankfurt's new Old Town is seen from the viewing platform of the Frankfurt Dom, about 200 feet above the city.

WHERE OLD IS NEW

Take a trip to Frankfurt's reconstructed Old Town

By MICHAEL ABRAMS
Stars and Stripes

It might sound very cliché, but out of the ashes and the dust, a new Old Town has arisen in downtown Frankfurt.

Before World War II, Frankfurt had one of Germany's largest and best-preserved medieval city centers, known for its half-timbered houses and warren of narrow streets.

Then came World War II. Allied bombing reduced the city to rubble. In the heart of the old town, between the Main River, the city hall and the cathedral, only one building remained relatively unscathed.

Following the war, the city hall — the Roemer — was rebuilt, but for a long time much of the area was empty space and even a parking lot.

In the 1970s a concrete monstrosity, the so-called technical city hall, was built between the Roemer and the Dom. In the '80s, a row of beautiful half-timbered houses was reconstructed, fooling to this day the tourists who think they are originals.

Earlier this century, plans were made to raze the modern city hall and replace it with the new Old Town.

The decision was met with love and hate. Many thought it was a brilliant idea, other said it would lead to a downtown Disneyland.

The concrete building was torn down starting in 2010 and construction began in 2012. Frankfurt's new Old Town

officially opened in September and has since been a major attraction. And not just for tourists. Almost all the living and commercial space in the 35 buildings — 15 reconstructed to original plans and 20 designed to fit in — are occupied.

The heart of the Old Town is the Huehnermarkt, or Chicken Market square. It features a bust of Friedrich Stoltze, a Frankfurt writer and poet.

One of the reconstructed houses at the rear of the square was the home of Johanna Melber, an aunt of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe whom he wrote about in one of his books. You can see her silhouette adorning the facade.

One of the most beautiful reconstructed houses is the half-timbered Goldene Waage, or Golden Scale. Check out the arm holding a golden scale that embellishes its facade.

Something else to see that's even older than the Old Town is the ruins of Roman Frankfurt that were discovered during an earlier construction project. They have been integrated into the new construction.

The best place to get an overview of the Old Town and to see how narrow the streets are is the viewing platform of the cathedral, about 200 feet above the city.

From here you can trace the "Coronation Way," the path newly crowned emperors walked from the cathedral to the Roemer after receiving the crown.

Now you can walk it, too.

abrams.mike@stripes.com
Twitter: @stripes_photos

ON THE QT

DIRECTIONS

Located between the Roemerberg and the cathedral (Dom). Entrance to parking garage Dom Roemer is on Domstrasse. Subway (U-bahn) lines 4 and 5 stop at Dom/Roemer; tram lines 11 and 12 stop at Roemer/Paulskirche.

TIMES

Always accessible

COSTS

Parking costs 2 euros per hour Monday-Saturday and 1 euro per hour Sunday.

Walking tours offered by the city cost 12.90 euros per person and can be booked online (see below). It costs 3 euros for adults and 1.50 euro for children to climb to the cathedral viewing platform. Beware: narrow, winding stairs.

FOOD

There are a couple of cafes and restaurants within the Old Town and plenty, in all price categories, nearby.

INFORMATION

For booking tours and other info go to www.frankfurt-tourismus.de/en. From now until Dec. 22, you can combine the trip with a visit to the Christmas market next door.

—Michael Abrams



The Huehnermarkt or Chicken Market is the center of the new Old Town construction in downtown Frankfurt, Germany. The bust at center is of Friedrich Stoltze, a Frankfurt writer and poet.



The Frankfurt Dom, or cathedral, rises above the newly constructed buildings in Frankfurt's new Old Town.



The ruins of Roman Frankfurt were excavated and integrated into the reconstruction of the city's Old Town.

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Europe

Savor historic Bath's easy urban delights

England's best city within two hours of London is beautiful, historic Bath. The city is popular and expensive, and it's a joy to visit. And rather than deal with London's intensity right off the bat, I like to take the train from the airport to London's Paddington Station and then hop on a connection to this more relaxed and elegant example of urban England.

Bath was a joy even in ancient Roman times, when patricians soaked in the city's mineral springs. From Londinium (today's London), Romans traveled so often to "Aquae Sulis," as the city was called, to "take a bath" that finally it became known simply as "Bath." Today, a fine museum surrounds the ancient bathing site. With the help of a great audio guide, visitors can wander past well-documented displays, Roman artifacts, excavated foundations and the actual mouth of the health-giving spring.

Bath later prospered as a wool town, building its grand abbey about 500 years ago — the last great medieval church built in England. The interior is lit with enough stained glass that it feels like the inside of a giant lantern.

By the middle of the 1600s, Bath's heyday had passed, and its population dropped to about 1,500 people — just a huddle of huts at the base of the abbey. Then, in 1687, King James II's wife, Queen Mary, struggling with infertility, came here and bathed. Within about 10 months, she gave birth to a son. A few decades later, her stepdaughter Queen Anne came here to treat her gut. With all this royal interest, Bath was reborn as a resort.

Most of the buildings you'll see in Bath today are from the 18th century — the cityscape is a triumph of the Neoclassical style that dominated the Georgian era, most of it built from the same honey-colored limestone. Free, fascinating town



Rick Steves

walks are offered every day by volunteers who bring to life highlights of this Georgian heritage — such as the Circus and Royal Crescent building complexes. The Circus is like a coliseum turned inside out, with Doric, Ionic and Corinthian capital decorations that pay homage to its Greco-Roman origin — a reminder that Bath (with its seven hills) aspired to be "the Rome of England." About a block away, the Royal Crescent is a long, graceful arc of buildings — impossible to see in one glance unless you step way back to the edge of the park in front. You can go inside one of these classy facades at No. 1 Royal Crescent, now a museum where you can see how the wealthy lived in 18th-century Bath.

During the Georgian era, Bath was the trendsetting Tinseltown of Britain, where the filthy rich used to escape the filthy cities. You can see how natty Georgian-era folks dressed at the Fashion Museum — which exhibits historic garments from every era since the days when there were no night or left shoes, up to the present. A major feature of the museum is the "Dress



DOMINIC ARIZONA BONICELLI/Ricksteves.com

The ancient Roman spa that gave Bath its name is the town's sightseeing centerpiece, with temple remains and a fine museum.

of the Year" display, ongoing since 1963. Above the Fashion Museum, you can view the city's historic Assembly Rooms, where card games, concerts, tea and dances were held (before fancy hotels with grand public spaces made them obsolete).

After a day of sightseeing, street theater is a fun evening option and a ritual for me in Bath. The best hour and a half of laughs I've had anywhere in Britain is on the Bizarre Bath Comedy Walk. It promises to include "absolutely no history or culture" during a wander of Bath's back lanes.

Listening to the guides is always a delight

— they might tell the same old jokes, but they're spiced up with a sharp, ad-lib wit that plays off the international crowd.

I also enjoy the Thermae Bath Spa, particularly during chilly evening visits, when Bath's twilight glows through the steam from the rooftop pool. It's pricey, but it's the only natural thermal spa in the UK, and your one chance to actually bathe in Bath.

Rick Steves (www.ricksteves.com) writes European travel guidebooks and hosts travel shows on public television and public radio. Email him at rick@ricksteves.com and follow his blog on Facebook.

TOP TRAVEL PICKS

Christmas markets like time machines

Christmas markets in Germany's larger cities are by now in full swing and will continue to work their magic on a daily basis right up until Dec. 23. Smaller villages, in contrast, often stage their Christmas markets only on an Advent weekend or two. Towns with ancient structures — castles, ramparts, churches or other unique features — will often use these appealing assets to stage medieval or other days-of-yesteryear-themed markets. These atmospheric, authentic backdrops, coupled with the fleeting nature of the events themselves, makes these markets stand out from a crowded field of tempting offerings. Here are a few short-lived Christmas markets worth the journey:

Auerbach/Nitzlbach

Christmas in the Iron Mine Dec. 8-9 (1-9 p.m. Dec. 8; 1-8 p.m. Dec. 9)

An abandoned mine is the atmospheric setting for this unique market featuring beautifully handcrafted items.

Online: tinyurl.com/y8b749kx

Bad Muenster am Stein

Christmas Market All Advent weekends (2-9 p.m. Saturdays; noon-8 p.m. Sundays)

In a spa town with a pretty park, in the shadow of a cliff, the usual treats are served, as con-



Karen Bradbury

Read more about things to do in the Europe Traveler blog: stripes.com/blogs/europe-traveler

certs, singalongs and fire shows entertain. A life-sized nativity scene completes the picture.

Online: tinyurl.com/yauwr0w5

Bad Urach

Christmas Market Dec. 7-9
Choirs, brass bands and a few craftsmen displaying their trades make a visit to this town in the mountains worth its while.

Online: tinyurl.com/yden7j96

Bissingen

Royal Christmas Market at Burg Hohenzollern Dec. 7-9

In terms of romance, it would be hard to beat this market set inside one of Germany's most impressive castles. Adult entry costs 10 euros; ages 15 and under enter free.

Online: tinyurl.com/y9y3zcvh

Cochem

Cochem Castle's Christmas Dec. 15-16

The courtyard of a mighty castle sets the scene for the Christmas story as portrayed by actors in historical costume and live animals. A 25-minute guided tour leads past various tableaux. Adult entry costs 6 euros, children pay 3 euros.

Online: tinyurl.com/yart5tj4

Ingelheim

Christmas Market by the Burgkirche Church Dec. 7-9, 14-16 and 21-23 (5-10 p.m. Fridays, 3-10 p.m. Saturdays, and 3-9 p.m. Sundays)

Near a late Gothic church on a hill, musicians play as visitors sip mulled wine and snack on local specialties. Children can craft their own magic wands.

Online: tinyurl.com/y9m6d89c

Maulbronn

Maulbronn Monastery Christmas Market Dec. 8-9 (noon-8 p.m. Dec. 8; 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Dec. 9)

An ancient cloister frames this market bursting with handmade crafts and regional specialties. St. Nicholas makes his appearance Sunday.

Online: tinyurl.com/ydyjsf3c

Oppenheim

Fairy Tale Christmas Dec. 15-16 (2-9 p.m. Dec. 15; 11 a.m.-8 p.m. Dec. 16)
The Middle Ages-themed



Courtesy of Bad Muenster am Stein

Christmas markets are springing up all over Germany, as at this event in Bad Muenster am Stein.

part of this Christmas market takes part in the courtyard of the majestic Katharinienkirche, one of the most beautiful Gothic churches along the Rhine.

Online: tinyurl.com/y9b3bs2r

Radolfzell

Christkindlemarkt Through Dec. 9
Artisans hard at work, specialties from the Lake Constance region and free family theatrical spectacles make this market special.

Online: www.radolfzell.de/christkindlemarkt

Ravennaschucht/ Ravenna Gorge

Ravenna Gorge Christmas Market

All Advent weekends

This market deep in the Black Forest has a character that's truly unique. Parking is limited, so be prepared to take a shuttle in. Nominal entry fees are charged to enter the market.

Online: tinyurl.com/y736fasdo

Sankt Wendel

Christmas and Middle Ages Market Dec. 8-16

A Middle Ages camp populated by reenactors, fire artists, magicians and musicians make one believe time transport is possible. Don't miss the Dwarf's Forest, a wonderfully quirky display of little people going about daily life in houses of yesterday.

Online: tinyurl.com/yecjoh24

WEEKEND: FOOD & DINING

Europe

After Hours: Italy

By SCOTT WYLAND
Stars and Stripes

Great Italian food can be found everywhere in Rome, but restaurants offering fine French cuisine are much rarer.

Le Carre Francais serves French-style meals morning, noon and night, making it even more uncommon. Breakfast is not a staple in Italy like it is in northern Europe.

The restaurant and espresso bar are a few blocks from the Tiber River in the city's downtown area, and prices are slightly higher than average for Rome.

The menus come in three languages — French, Italian and English — and the servers speak all three.

Aside from regular menu items, Le Carre has specials du jour. One evening I ordered the salmon quiche special for 17 euros (\$19). I also tried chicken supreme with mushrooms and a puree for 20 euros (\$22.50). I chose a glass of French cabernet called Chateau La Bergere, which was just dry enough for this meal.

I posted my meal on social media, using the fancy-sounding French — a friend teased that it translated to chicken and mashed potatoes along with whipped eggs, salmon and cheese (the quiche).

True, but how the food was prepared elevated it. The chicken was marinated, slow-cooked and so tender you barely had to chew it. The puree was not too sweet or sour, with a hint of berry. The quiche was light, with a fine blend of salmon and cheese. A flavorful herbal seasoning made the mashed potatoes the best I can recall eating.

The restaurant also has plenty to offer meat eaters, seafood lovers and vegetarians.

For example, there's salt cod brandade for 17 euros, a minced sirloin steak called Carre's Tartare for 20 euros and the gardenier's (19 euros) that has potatoes, beans, tomatoes and julienned zucchini.

The restaurant staff is helpful and friendly, except for one male barista who does his best to imitate a brusque Parisian. But that just adds to Le Carre's ambience.

wyland.scott@stripes.com
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— Scott Wyland

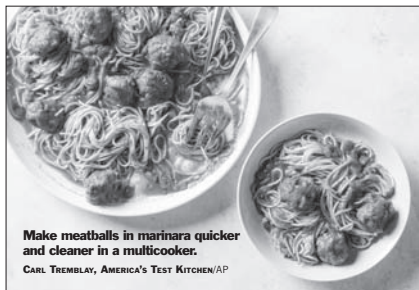


Patrons may bring in their dogs during the day.



PHOTOS BY SCOTT WYLAND/Stars and Stripes

Le Carre Francais is a popular French restaurant near the Tiber River in Rome. Patrons can choose from at least 20 wines to go with the French cuisine. On the plate: salmon quiche and spinach.



Make meatballs in marinara quicker and cleaner in a multicooker.

CARL TREMBLAY, AMERICA'S TEST KITCHEN/AP

Make classic meatballs in marinara with multicooker

America's Test Kitchen

It's hard to find anyone who doesn't love a bowl of spaghetti topped with meatballs and marinara, but stovetop versions are often messy (between the spattering oil from frying the meatballs and the spattering tomato sauce), and the sauce requires a long simmering time to develop rich, deep flavor.

We turned to the multicooker for the neatest and most efficient method for making classic meatballs in marinara. Meatloaf mix provided a combination of ground beef, pork and veal, making our grocery list short without sacrificing flavor.

The meatballs were a bit dry, so we added an egg and a panade — a paste of bread and

milk — for moisture, resulting in tender meatballs that would also hold their shape.

We seared the meatballs until they were crisp and brown; the deep pot of the multicooker kept spattering to a minimum, and the remaining sauce a flavorful foundation for our marinara. We cooked some aromatics, added crushed tomatoes and tomato puree, and returned the meatballs to the pot.

From there, we could either briefly pressure cook the mixture, or let it cook for a few hours on the slow cook setting.

The final product was a pot full of flavorful and tender yet firm meatballs in a robust, savory tomato sauce. If you cannot find meatloaf mix, substitute 8 ounces 85 percent lean ground beef and 85 ounces ground pork.

MEATBALLS AND MARINARA

Servings: 4-6
Pressure cook total time: 1 hour

Slow cook total time: 4 hours, 30 minutes

Ingredients:

2 slices hearty white sandwich bread, torn into ½-inch pieces

¼ cup whole milk

1 ounce Parmesan cheese,

grated (½ cup)

3 tablespoons minced fresh

parsley

1 large egg, lightly beaten

6 garlic cloves, minced

Salt and pepper

1 pound meatloaf mix

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive

oil

2 tablespoons minced fresh

oregano or 2 teaspoons dried

1 tablespoon tomato paste

1 (28 ounce) can crushed

tomatoes

1 (28 ounce) can tomato puree

1 pound spaghetti

¼ cup chopped fresh basil

Directions:

Using fork, mash bread and milk into paste in large bowl. Stir in Parmesan, parsley, egg, half of garlic, ¼ teaspoon salt and ½ teaspoon pepper. Add meatloaf mix and knead with hands until thoroughly combined. Pinch off and roll mixture into 12 meatballs (about ½ cup each).

Using highest sauté or browning function, heat oil in multicooker for 5 minutes (or until just smoking). Brown meatballs on

all sides, 6 to 8 minutes; transfer to plate.

Add oregano, tomato paste, ¼ teaspoon salt and remaining garlic to fat left in multicooker and cook about 1 minute. Stir in tomatoes and tomato puree, scraping up any browned bits. Nestle meatballs into sauce, adding any accumulated juices.

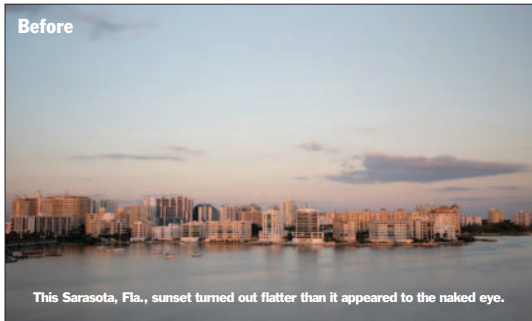
To pressure cook: Lock lid in place and close pressure release valve. Select high pressure cook function and cook for 15 minutes. Turn off multicooker and quick-release pressure. Carefully remove lid, allowing steam to escape away from you.

To slow cook: Lock lid in place and open pressure release valve. Select low slow cook function and cook until meatballs are tender, 3 to 4 hours. (If using Instant Pot, select high slow cook function and increase cooking range to 4 to 5 hours.) Turn off multicooker and carefully remove lid, directing steam away from you.

Meanwhile, bring 4 quarts water to boil in large pot. Add pasta and 1 tablespoon salt and cook, stirring often, until al dente. Reserve ½ cup cooking water, then drain pasta and return it to pot. Add several spoonfuls of sauce (without meatballs) and basil and toss to combine. Add reserved cooking water as needed to adjust consistency. Serve pasta with remaining sauce and meatballs.

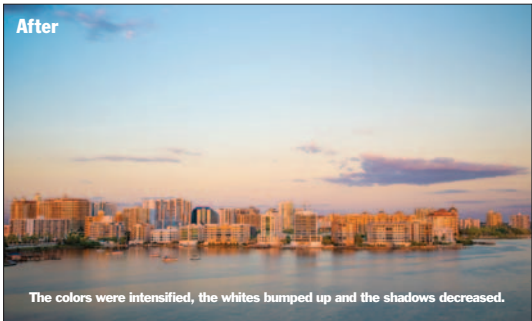
WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Before



This Sarasota, Fla., sunset turned out flatter than it appeared to the naked eye.

After



The colors were intensified, the whites bumped up and the shadows decreased.

By ROY FURCHGOTT
Special to The Washington Post

Deborah Sandidge is a travel photographer who has written books on photography, teaches advanced photo technique workshops and has been honored as a Nikon Ambassador. In short, she knows her stuff.

When she photographed the Cathedral Basilica of Our Lady of the Assumption in Santiago de Cuba, she used all of her know-how; she scouted ahead of time, found a rooftop vantage from which to shoot and waited until the light was perfect. But the resulting photo was a flop. "I wasn't getting the emotion," she said.

Then she applied the "art sauce" that virtually every travel photographer uses. She used software to tweak the image, turning the color photo into a dramatic black and white. "It just didn't feel right until I removed the color," she said. "I felt like this is what I was going for, and all that emotion and vintage feel was allowed to show through in the image."

This is the secret of professional travel photographers. No matter how good the image they capture is, the editing — called postproduction, or "post" for short — makes it a little better. Sometimes, a lot better.

But it's not just for pros. Smartphones come with built-in editing software that can transform travel photos from washed-out to wow. It only takes a minute and a few screen swipes to improve photos. Whether you are editing on a phone or with an advanced desktop digital darkroom program, the controls are similar. "They all do pretty much the same things. They even call the adjustments the same things," said Scott Kelby, internationally known Photoshop artist and founder of KelbyOne, a photography education website.

The of the Edit

Get the most from your travel photos with these tips for postproduction

The first step in editing is to pick out the biggest problem with your photo. "There is not a magical step list of things to do to the photo," said Josh Hafel, principal product manager for Adobe, which makes Photoshop. "It depends on what the image needs."

Framing often is the problem, said Rick Sammon, a photography educator who has been honored as a Canon Explorer of Light. When photos include too much, the eye is not drawn to the intended subject. That can be fixed with the crop tool, which lets you shrink the frame and recompose so the subject is placed where you want it. "Cut the clutter," Sammon said. "Painters add to a canvas, photographers subtract." He uses the tool so much that he claims to have "OCD — obsessive cropping disorder."

Because cameras can see only a portion of the range of light that the eye can see, in many photos the darks are too dark and the brights are too bright. "You want the picture to look like it does to your eyes," Sammon said. "All of the software has shadow and highlight sliders."

Turning the shadows brighter and highlights darker will make the photo look

more like it does to your eye. If that makes the darks too gray, look for the "black point" control. It will make the blacks blacker without killing all of the detail in the shadows.

When the exposure is set, there is another critical adjustment: clarity, which is generally called something like "sharpness" or "structure."

"Just think of this as the detail-enhancing slider," Kelby said. "We admire the details." However, be careful: Not every photo benefits from sharpness. "You don't want to use it on a baby," he said. It can accentuate skin blotchiness. "They start to look like they have been bruised in a fight."

Pro photographers know that the best time to capture images is during the "golden hours" around dawn and dusk, when the light has a tint. But they also know that the tint is easy to add. "Because I am a travel photographer and I am interested in making pleasing pictures, I will often warm up a picture, meaning I will add a little bit of red, yellow and orange," said Sammon. Look for an adjustment called something like "temperature," "warmth" or "cast" to make this adjustment.

Some of these tools are easy to find on your phone or tablet, and some you might have to dig for a bit. The location of the controls will vary from device to device, but on most phones and tablets, you pick a photo, then touch edit. That should reveal an icon that looks like a menu, or a dial, which uncovers options. Often it's one more layer down for the full set of controls. You may have to touch an arrow or an icon to get there. Check your manual, or just keep digging until you get to the longest list of adjustment controls.

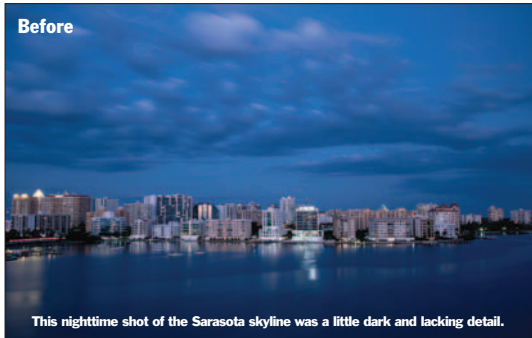
Of course, you can alter your photos by just throwing a filter on them. And pro photographers aren't necessarily against using filters, especially if you have a style that lends itself to a particular look. For instance, Kelby points to the Instagram account *cestmria*, by Marioly Vazquez, whose photos are all similarly pastel hued and are shot specifically to use with what may be a single filter. "I don't think there is anything wrong with that," Kelby said. "When people are smart like [cestmria], it's just so likable."

But a filter is just someone else's set of adjustments that are made to look good on someone else's photo. "If you just slap a filter on every kind of photo — here's my brother-in-law, here's a moon shot — the filter will be what people notice," Kelby said.

A filter, sometimes called a "preset" on more advanced digital darkroom software, can also be a good starting point. "Sometimes going to presets can be a springboard to inspiration. If you choose a preset, I wouldn't use it at 100 percent; dial it back," said Sandidge, meaning adjust the intensity of the effect so that it is not overly apparent. "Let the subject guide you. That's where the personal style comes in," she said. "That's what makes it yours."

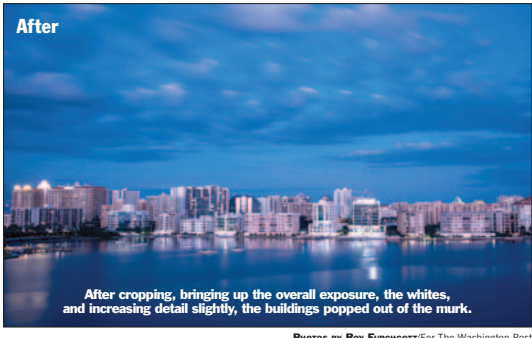
CONTINUED ON PAGE 31

Before



This nighttime shot of the Sarasota skyline was a little dark and lacking detail.

After



After cropping, bringing up the overall exposure, the whites, and increasing detail slightly, the buildings popped out of the murk.

FROM PAGE 30

The adjustments with filters are all applied to your entire photo and can be done quickly. More advanced software will let you make changes to parts of a picture, such as intensifying blue tones or erasing a light pole that spoils the shot.

For editing on the phone, Sandidge uses an app called Snapseed if she wants "to put something on Instagram in real time and punch it up a little." Snapseed will do more than the average software that comes with your phone. It has quite a few tools, which can be a bit overwhelming. But it has a tutorial, and you can cancel any changes you make to a photo without fear of ruining it. It can do the simple edits mentioned above, but it's powerful enough to touch up skin blemishes or remove an unwanted railing from a photo.

The granddaddy of postproduction software is, of course, Photoshop. Adobe makes a range of products, some very simple to use, such as PS Express, which is free but requires you to share personal information before you can use it.

Many pro photographers lean heavily on Lightroom, a powerful but simplified version of Photoshop that costs \$10 a month and will work on desktops, laptops, tablets and phones. It uses a slider system and a few tools that let you make adjustments to color and sharpness, remove blemishes, adjust lighting and much more.

Or you can move up to the full version of Photoshop, which allows sophisticated editing such as repositioning people, adding clouds to a sky, changing people's expressions and adjusting color with surgical accuracy. By itself, Photoshop costs \$21 a month. But you can get Lightroom and Photoshop with limited online storage for the same \$10 a month as Lightroom alone.

There are alternatives that might be less expensive in the long run, such as ON1, a powerful editing program with simplified controls. It doesn't have some of the more sophisticated tools of Photoshop, but beginners will find it easier to use. The recently released 2019 version is \$100 with no subscription fee, or \$80 to upgrade from an older version.

There is also Luminar, a \$60 program that has much of the Lightroom editing power, plus handy effects such as a filter that improves sky, and one that places golden rays of sun in your shot. It also has an artificial-intelligence adjustment that makes multiple changes to a photo at once. It's a great starting place for any editing, but you may find that you still have to fine-tune manually for full effect.

If that sounds like too much work, Luminar sells a program called Photo Lemur (\$35), which is just the artificial-intelligence adjustment with a single slider. While postproduction editing is intended to fix problems, it can create problems of its own. Ask Kelly for the most common editing mistake people make, and he'll tell you: "Overprocessing the photos."

"It's kind of like if you like your food salty, you make it saltier and saltier, you become immune to it," he said. "But someone else tastes it and goes, 'Whoa!'"

The rule of thumb is this: If people can see that the photo has been processed, you've over-processed.

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WEEKEND: QUICK TRIPS

Pacific

Sun, surf, season's greetings

Illuminations make holiday cheer easy to come by on tropical Okinawa

By AYA ICHIHASHI
Stars and Stripes

It might seem like a challenge to get into the holiday spirit on Okinawa, as the island's subtropical climate makes the winter feel less like a time for Santa Claus and gingerbread and more like a time for hitting the beach in a pair of shorts and a tank top.

However, thanks to the many winter illumination events currently taking place across the prefecture, those yearning to make some magical memories with their family can easily find the inspiration they're looking for just in time for the holidays.

Illuminations are Japan's version of the extravagant holiday light displays often seen throughout the United States during the winter months. They can range from elegant and upscale to whimsical and kid-friendly. The tradition first began in the city of Sapporo in 1981 and has now spread across the country, with many larger cities playing host to countless illumination events. These days, it's not uncommon to see both families and young couples enjoying the lights and holiday atmosphere — making illumination viewing an ideal activity for people of all ages.

While many of these events end after the Christmas and New Year's holidays, there are some that run through late January and early February. On Okinawa, the Itoman Peaceful Illumination is one of the first illuminations to close, taking place from Dec. 15 to Jan. 3 — so it makes an ideal place for illumination first-timers to kick off the holiday season.

Itoman is the southernmost city of Okinawa, known as one of the locations with the most civilian casualties during World War II. Inspired by the city's history, the Itoman tourist bureau and local volunteers started the annual illumination event 20 years ago to promote world peace.

The illumination, at Uchina Farm, hosts numerous vendors selling a variety of traditional Japanese festival food, so don't forget to bring some yen (and an appetite).

Itoman is particularly famous for its fish-

ing industry, which the event honors with a giant display of an illuminated ocean decorated with traditional sabani fishing boats. Itoman Peaceful Illumination's centerpiece display is its large Christmas tree draped in layers of lights. Admission is 500 yen for adults (\$4.41), while children of middle school age and younger can enter for free.

Stardust Fantasia, located at the Kanucha Resort about 10 minutes from Camp Schwab, also celebrates its 20th anniversary this year. The event, which runs through Feb. 14, is the largest on Okinawa. Stardust Fantasia is spread out across the resort grounds, so a free shuttle is offered to help transport visitors between displays. Admission is 1,500 yen for ages 12 and older, with an additional 1,000-yen fee charged from Dec. 22-25.

On some evenings, visitors to Stardust Fantasia can expect live holiday-themed music performed with an Okinawan twist by a local band. Stardust Fantasia staff will be handing out heart-shaped Christmas ornaments, complete with space to write a wish, to hang on the resort's 30-foot-tall "Mother Tree."

For a smaller, more relaxed and elegant display, the Dream Fantasy Illumination — located at Okinawa Kariyushi Beach Resort Ocean Spa about 30 minutes from Kadena Air Base — is famous for its beautiful coastal scenery. It's the perfect spot for a romantic evening, and best of all, it's free.

Closer to Kadena, the Southeast Botanical Gardens hosts the popular Nostalgia Illumination, which runs through March 31. During the illumination event, the garden — which is a popular spot for families and couples to gather on weekends — extends its opening hours until 10 p.m. to allow patrons to enjoy the lighted displays. Admission is 1,800 yen for adults, 1,000 yen for high schoolers and 500 yen for children ages 6 and older. From Dec. 22-25, admission requires an additional 2,000-yen fee.

Like Stardust Fantasia, Nostalgia Illumination also allows visitors to write their wishes for the new year on ornaments that are hung on a large Christmas tree in the park. An illuminated playground offers the perfect space for little ones to let loose, while couples



The Itoman Peaceful Illumination is one of the earliest, running from Dec. 15 to Jan. 3.

can enjoy the romance-themed "Love Area," complete with lighted heart-shaped padlocks.

Southeast Botanical Gardens' restaurant, Restaurant Peace, offers buffet dining featuring more than 50 dishes made from locally grown vegetables and park-harvested herbs. The park is promoting a special four-course dinner for two on weekends during the illumination, which costs 9,000 yen and includes park admission.

Okinawa's numerous illuminations prove that even if you are surrounded by beaches and the weather is warm, there is still a holiday season to celebrate with those you love. Who wouldn't want to sip hot cocoa under the glow of a thousand lights overlooking Okinawa's tropical landscape?

ichihashi.aya@stripes.com

ITOMAN PEACEFUL ILLUMINATION

LOCATION: Itoman Tourism Uchina Farm, 1018 Mabuni, Itoman City
HOURS: Open daily from 5:30 p.m. until 10 p.m.

ADMISSION: Adult admission is 500 yen (or about \$4.75), with children ages 12 and under free.
INFORMATION: Itoman Peaceful Illumination runs from Dec. 15 to Jan. 3.

STARDUST FANTASIA

LOCATION: Kanucha Resort Okinawa, 156-2 Abu, Nago, Okinawa Prefecture 905-2263

HOURS: Through Dec. 31, open daily from 6 to 11 p.m.; last entry at 8:30 p.m. From Jan. 1 through Feb. 14, open daily from 7 to 11 p.m., with last entry at 8:30 p.m.
COST: Admission is 1,500 yen for adults, with an additional 1,000 yen fee required Dec. 22-25. Admission for children ages 12 and under, as well as hotel and dinner guests at the resort, is free.

INFORMATION: Stardust Fantasia runs until Feb. 14. Online: www.kanucha.jp/en

KARIYUSHI DREAM FANTASY

LOCATION: Okinawa Kariyushi Beach Resort Ocean Spa, 591-1 Nakama, Onna, Kunigami District, Okinawa Prefecture 904-0401

HOURS: Open daily, from sunset until midnight. Live music begins at 7 and 8 nightly. Aqua Illusion Show at 7:30 and 8:30 p.m.
ADMISSION: Free
INFORMATION: Kariyushi Dream Fantasy runs through Feb. 28. Online: beachresort-oceanspa.kariyushi-inb.com/en-gb

NOSTALGIA ILLUMINATION

LOCATION: Southeast Botanical Gardens, 2146 Chibana, Okinawa, Okinawa Prefecture 904-2143

HOURS: Open daily from 5 to 10 p.m.
ADMISSION: Adult admission is 1,800 yen. Admission for high school-aged children is 1,000 yen; middle school- and elementary school-aged children cost 500 yen. From Dec. 22-25, admission requires an additional 2,000-yen fee.
INFORMATION: Nostalgia Illumination runs through March 31. Online: www.southeast-botanical.jp/en



PHOTOS BY AYA ICHIHASHI/Stars and Stripes

Itoman Peaceful Illumination's central display is its large Christmas tree, draped in layers of lights. Several illuminations light up Okinawa.

WEEKEND: FOOD & DINING

Pacific



PHOTOS BY THERON GODBOLD/Stars and Stripes

Located in a parking lot near Yokota Air Base's skate park, Yes Cafe is a welcome alternative to premade coffee drinks from vending machines or convenience stores.



After Hours: Japan

BY THERON GODBOLD
Stars and Stripes

Yes Cafe, a new addition to Yokota Air Base, is keeping residents of the installation's east side caffeinated — and they're doing it all out of a small truck.

Located in a parking lot adjacent to the base's skate park, this coffee truck is a welcome alternative to the premade coffee drinks sold from vending machines or nearby convenience stores. Coffee lovers longing for a macchiato or a hand-poured latte close to home are sure to enjoy Yes Cafe's extensive selection of espresso-based drinks.

After being stationed in Italy before coming to Japan, I admittedly became a bit of a coffee snob — but after visiting Yes Cafe shortly after it opened in early November, I was relieved to find its coffee is just as good (if not better) than most of the coffee served at local cafes in the neighborhoods around Yokota.

Yes Cafe's \$1.50 espresso, my personal drink of choice during my visits, is strong yet mellow, leaving a slight bite at the end of each sip. If mochas or lattes are more to your liking, Yes Cafe's drink menu has plenty of options to supply the coffee buzz, including cafe Americano, cappuccino, cafe latte, cafe mocha, caramel macchiato and hot chocolate. The pricing is decent, starting at \$1.50 for an espresso, \$3 for a regular cafe Americano, \$3.35 for a cappuccino and \$3.95 for a caramel macchiato.

The only setback the newly-opened coffee truck has is the temperature of the drinks, which were a little on the cool side. (I was assured this was something that the cafe's staff is working on improving.)

If you're looking for something to go with your cup of joe, Yes Cafe also sells a small selection of food items. The lineup isn't particularly diverse for a coffee stand — for example, you won't find breakfast sandwiches or bagels on the menu — but the dishes do make a nice addition to the dining options on the east side of the installation.

Yes Cafe's major food offering is Belgian waffles (starting at \$1.75 for a single waffle), which come in unique



Waffle toppings such as espresso whipped cream and caramel are available at an additional cost.

flavors including cinnamon and brownie. Toppings such as espresso whipped cream and caramel are also available at an additional cost. For those in need of a quick bite, a rotating selection of fresh fruit, as well as pre-cooked hardboiled eggs and muffins, are also available. For lunch, Yes Cafe offers a pulled pork sandwich (\$5.35), which is cooked daily. The pork, which is piled onto a hamburger bun, is juicy and flavorful — and surprisingly tender for coming out of a small truck. As a Southerner, the only thing I thought was missing from the pork was the rich, smoky flavor often found in traditional barbecue.

Yes Cafe is still rather unknown among the base's residents, so the lines can be short. When I visited, there was only one other person waiting. Since the cafe is located in a parking lot, seating is nonexistent. Yes Cafe is more of a "grab and go" shop for those in a rush to get to the office or drop the kids off at school.

In the summer months, Yes Cafe will also serve Kikigoriccino (\$4.10) — a twist on kakigori, or Japanese shaved ice, with cappuccino.

While Yes Cafe is still finding its footing, making a pit stop at the truck has quickly become a part of



Coffee lovers longing for a macchiato or a hand-poured latte close to home are sure to enjoy Yes Cafe's extensive selection of espresso-based drinks.

YES CAFE

Location: Yes Cafe is located on Yokota Air Base, directly adjacent to the skate park on the east side of the installation.

Hours: Open Monday through Saturday from 6:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Cost: Beverages range from \$1.35 for a cup of tea to \$4.10 for the Kikigoriccino. Food also varies in price, with a Grab 'n Go Muffin costing \$1.50 and a pulled pork sandwich going for \$5.35. Credit cards are accepted.

Information: facebook.com/YokotaEastSideCafe

— Theron Godbold

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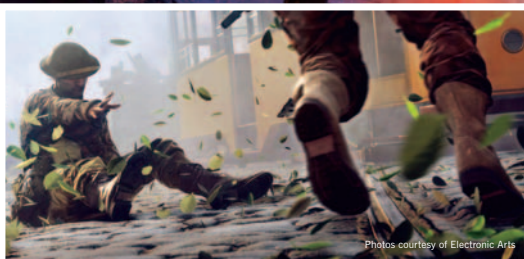
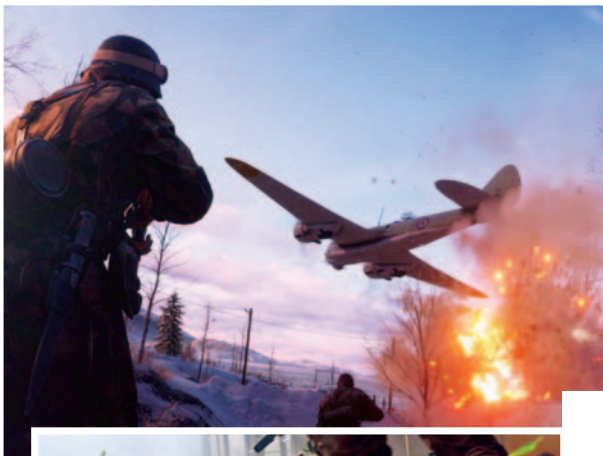
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WEEKEND: VIDEO GAMES



Photos courtesy of Electronic Arts

By MICHAEL THOMSEN
Special to The Washington Post

The “Battlefield” series has never gone in order, or even really added up. “Battlefield V” is technically the 15th game in the series, not the fifth. It’s the direct sequel to “Battlefield 1,” which was the 14th game, not the first. The first was 2002’s “Battlefield: 1942,” 2005’s “Battlefield 2” was actually the third in the series, and there were seven games released between it and “Battlefield 3.”

Though the title of each always seems straightforward, when you look back across the series it seems to have lost track of itself. These are games built around moments that blend together without ever really connecting.

Perhaps for that reason, DICE has taken “Battlefield V” back to the familiar territory of World War II. The centerpiece, now as then, is the online multiplayer, which spreads six different modes across eight expansive maps loosely drawn from history. There are two in the idyllic marshlands of northern France, two in the snow-covered peaks of Norway, two in the cramped urban grid of Rotterdam, and two in the dusty barrens of North Africa.

In the absence of big, new ideas, like “Battlefield 1’s” “Behemoths” or “Battlefield 4’s” system for radically transforming the terrain of maps with scripted catastrophes like tsunamis of a skyscraper collapsing, DICE has focused on a collection of gentle design nudges to encourage

people to play in a slightly different way. Players start with less ammunition for guns, encouraging four-player squads to stick closer together. One new mode, Airborne, has players parachuting into the map from planes after each death. Another, Grand Operations, has players competing for the same handful of control points as other modes, but spreads it across three different rounds that are meant to simulate three days of battle, with the team ahead given extra supplies to use for the next round. Unfortunately, these updates feel marginal.



Inside the push and pull of each match, the game sets numerous petty goals that help players to gain levels and gear: Capture control point C, kill eight more people in multiplayer to unlock Assault level 14, damage 10 enemies with an explosive gadget to complete a Daily Order to earn in-game currency for new uniforms and cosmetic gun parts. Even minor actions like squatting beneath a capture point or piling sandbags accrues experience. There’s something ghostly in how urgent each new goal is, and how quickly forgotten past ones are. It’s like trying to run through a to-do list written in disappearing ink.

The sense of forgetfulness extends to the game’s single-player, “War Stories” mode. As with “Battlefield 1,” DICE has chosen an anthology structure with three unconnected

‘Battlefield V’ struggles to make sense of history

chapters. One follows an English prisoner set free and sent to Libya to fight for England. Another follows a Senegalese man in the French infantry as part of the “tirailleurs,” units recruited from colonies and sent to the frontlines. The third follows a stealthy young woman as she tries to save her mother, a resistance fighter kidnapped while spying on a Nazi program to develop a nuclear weapon.

The mission is inspired by Operation Gunnerside, a covert effort to destroy a heavy water manufacturing plant in the mountains of Norway that took more than six months. A small band of Norwegian resistance fighters spent months attempting to parachute into the snowy mountains but were turned back twice. When they finally reached the ground they had to haul themselves and their 650 pounds of gear more than 60 miles through the snow. They spent the next several months waiting for a second group to parachute in before finally conducting the raid, which was pulled off successfully with no gunfire.

The game doesn’t just erase these details, it overwrites them. The fantasy of lone heroism displaces the facts behind history’s slow and collective struggles. Games like “Red Orchestra 2: Heroes of Stalingrad” offered players no aiming reticle or onscreen information about health or ammunition while encouraging players to spend most of their time waiting behind cover, with only fleeting glimpses of the enemy. “This War of Mine” asked the player to balance resources while surviving a siege with no end in sight. Even “Call of Duty: World at War” presented its impossibly high-speed shootouts as self-conscious hedonism. Its tastelessness felt not just appropriate but

almost responsible, a mental exercise reminding one that the game’s violent spectacles belong more to the realm of fantasy than fact.

By comparison, “Battlefield V’s” unironic solemnity feels untrustworthy, too comfortable in investing its hedonic inventions as history reduced to its purest essence. It has the surreal clarity of a false memory, something the game’s visuals amplify. Everything has the molded hardness of plastic, a profusion of replicas that aren’t beautiful so much as they are captivatingly anamorphic: skin pores rimmed with dirt, eyeballs that glisten in worried faces, enemy soldiers that lean sleepily against a crate, then walk off to the bushes to urinate, return to their post, and then walk back into the bushes to urinate.

There’s an impression of disposability behind these sights, a tone that resonates through the thoughtlessness of the game’s multiplayer modes and binds its single-player stories together. The game trains you for it with its opening tutorial, in which you zoom through the final moments of a half-dozen soldiers during World War II. Players control each for the last 30 seconds or minute of their life, and when they die, the camera leaps out of the first-person perspective and soars into orbit before settling on a new location and zooming back down to inhabit another body. As the deaths pile up like candy wrappers, you are being taught to take pleasure, not in discovering history but throwing it away, one stray detail after another.

Platforms: PlayStation 4, Xbox One, Windows
Online: www.ea.com/games/battlefield/battlefield-5

WEEKEND: LIFESTYLE

The Perfect gift

Millennials are changing the traditional wedding registry and are forgoing the traditional china and crystal and asking guests to contribute instead to honeymoon adventures, charitable causes and more.

By MELISSA KOSSLER DUTTON
Associated Press

When Lila Chess and Aron Kandel were planning their January 2018 wedding, the New York City couple was wary of acquiring too much stuff. They lived in a small apartment with limited storage. Lila opted not to have a shower in order to keep gifts at a minimum.

But the couple knew that friends and family would want to celebrate their nuptials with presents. They found a registry that included traditional gift options but also things other than stuff — donations to charity and to their honeymoon adventures in Fiji and New Zealand.

"People were really excited about the chance to help with our honeymoon," recalled Lila Chess Kandel. "Friends and family who know us said, 'That's awesome. You guys are super-adventurous. We want to support that.'"

As couples strive to infuse their weddings with personal touches, changing up the registry is a natural, said Ashlie Lynch, communications chair for the American Association of Certified Wedding Planners. Many brides and grooms are forgoing formal dinnerware and household goods and replacing them with asks for money to fund experiences or significant purchases.

Couples are becoming increasingly comfortable asking guests for money, added Lauren Kay, deputy editor at TheKnot.com, a wedding planning website.

Between 2011 and 2017, the number of couples who had cash registries increased from 1 percent to 6 percent, according to a survey by TheKnot.com. In many cases, couples provide detailed explanations on the registry of how they intend to spend the money. Requests range from down payments on a house to in vitro fertilization treatments. That information "makes guests feel better about handing over cash," Kay said. "It's reframing the way we think about gifts."

It also suits the lifestyle of millennials — those born between 1981 and 1997. Three out of four millennials said they prefer spending money on experiences over things, according to a 2017 Eventbrite survey.

Some resorts that cater to honeymooners offer registries. At the Fairmont Orchid in Hawaii, couples can request that friends and relatives chip in toward spa treatments, romantic dinners and sunrise canoe outings. "We've seen many couples who've exercised this option with success and have enjoyed their once-in-a-lifetime dream honeymoons as a result," said resort spokeswoman Catherine Cambra.

Kayleigh and Daniel Caskey, who were married in 2017, had no problem asking guests to contribute to their honeymoon.

"It was a way of saying, 'Hey you were part of our wedding day and now you're a part of a time when

we're celebrating our marriage together that you can follow on Facebook,'" Kayleigh said. Many traditional gifts "will break or wear down and have to be replaced. We'll never have a honeymoon again. We will always remember those experiences."

Most of their friends and relatives understood, she said, but a few still bought traditional gifts that the couple isn't sure they will ever use.

Before their 2016 wedding, Brady and Erica Robertson had a talk with one relative to ensure she did not "surprise" them with china they would never use. "When friends and family visit, we are more likely to order pizza and eat off paper plates than to provide an elaborate meal," said Erica, of Columbus, Ohio. "We didn't want a lot of extraneous gifts because we didn't have a lot of room to store everything."



Lila and Aron Kandel tour Milford Sound on the South Island of New Zealand during their honeymoon.

COURTESY OF LILA KANDEL/AP



COURTESY OF KAYLEIGH CASKEY/AP

Daniel Caskey feeds a giraffe at the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo while on a vacation in Colorado Springs, Colo., that was funded by a wedding gift from one of his guests.

Charity wedding registries more than tripled in popularity last year, Kay said, from 3 percent of couples in 2016 to 10 percent in 2017.

Initially, Sarah Mulvaney and Matthew Schimenti intended to tell wedding guests they did not wish to receive any gifts for their June 2018 event, but relatives persuaded them to provide an option. The couple from Rowayton, Conn., decided to use their happy occasion to help a favorite charity. Using The Good Beginning, a registry for couples seeking charitable donations in lieu of gifts, the Schimentis solicited donations for The Carver Foundation, which provides youth programming in Morris, Conn.

"To us, our wedding was always about celebrating our love and the coming together of everyone we both love," she said. "We have all that we need, and giving back was the least we could do."

It makes sense that millennials would redefine traditional wedding registries, said Karen McGrath, co-author of "The Millennial Mindset: Unraveling Fact from Fiction" and a professor at the College of Saint Rose in Albany, N.Y. Millennials tend to prioritize giving back, taking care of the environment and doing things rather than owning them, she said. Everything about fancy china and crystal — from storing it to the packaging it comes in — would be a turn-off for many young couples, she said.

Many millennials also choose to live in smaller or shared spaces, and move often, she said, which makes it difficult to have a lot of stuff.

"It's a completely different mindset," she said. "They're much more mobile."

And even newlyweds who want fine things for their homes may already have them, added Beth Helmstetter, a wedding planner who in 2016 founded The Good Beginning. With couples marrying later in life and often sharing a home before exchanging vows, they often have all they need, she said.

Sarah and Matthew Schimenti during their wedding ceremony at Wirivian Farm in Morris, Conn. Initially, the couple intended to tell wedding guests they did not wish to receive any gifts for their wedding, but decided to use their happy occasion to help a favorite charity, The Carver Foundation, which provides youth programming in the Connecticut town.

BETH HELMSTETTER
EVENTS-THE GOOD BEGINNING/AP



WEEKEND: MOVIES



She's PRETTY particular

Julia Roberts mulls film roles carefully before she decides

BY AMY KAUFMAN
Los Angeles Times

“Every year,” Julia Roberts says, shaking her head. “Every year it’s: ‘And now she’s back.’”

Listen, she gets it. She doesn’t act at as frequent a pace as some of her peers, like Nicole Kidman, who of late has appeared in at least three major projects a year. Roberts admires that kind of work ethic, she says, though it perplexes her “how people can juggle that much work” when she just doesn’t “have that capacity.”

So while it may seem like this winter signals a new era for Roberts — starring in both the acclaimed Amazon series “Homecoming” and “Ben Is Back,” an indie drug-addiction drama — this is kind of business as usual for her. Over the last decade, she’s continued to work steadily, always turning up in at least one movie a year, and sometimes two. Other than 2010’s “Eat, Pray, Love,” though, she has largely strayed from playing the kind of charismatic romantic heroines that made her one of the biggest movie stars in the world.

The majority of her recent performances have been dramatic turns in smaller-sealed films, and many have been supporting roles. Some of that, she says, has to do with being 51.

“I think with age comes complexity and the opportunity to portray different people,” she explains. “Everybody in their life is going to experience heartbreak or unrequited love or chasing a boy or a girl. Everybody is going to be somebody in ‘My Best Friend’s Wedding’ at some point in their life. I think there is less of that kind of commonality in some of the parts I play now.”

That’s certainly the case with her part in Sam Esmail’s “Homecoming.” The psychological thriller follows a caseworker who is tasked with helping soldiers ease back into civilian life at a government-sponsored facility. Her performance in the series has been lauded for its quiet subtlety, employing a totally different skill set than the one she uses for another well-reviewed turn in “Ben Is Back.” In the film, Roberts plays a mother dealing with the fallout of her son’s unexpected return home from drug rehab on Christmas.

It’s pouring rain outside and Roberts has just made a mad dash from the lobby of the Sunset Marquis to the restaurant of the West Hollywood, Calif., hotel. As she took off her dripping metallic raincoat, she fretted that the weather might cause mudslides near her home in Malibu. She and her family had only days before returned to their home following the wildfires that ravaged the beach city.

INVISION/AP

CONTINUED ON PAGE 37

WEEKEND: MOVIES

Roberts is sensational in drama 'Ben Is Back'

By KATIE WALSH
Tribune News Service

Loving an addict is a nearly impossible thing to do. Writer-director Peter Hedges captures the aching difficulty with a crystalline and harrowing clarity in "Ben Is Back." It stars his son, Lucas Hedges, as Ben, and Julia Roberts as Ben's mother, Holly, whose Christmas wish is to have Ben home for the holiday. It's a lesson in being careful what you wish for.

"Ben Is Back," set within a contained 24 hours, doesn't need to show or overly tell about Ben's past. That's communicated clearly in the extreme reactions the family has to his return.

"Mom — stop," is the first thing Ben's sister Ivy says when they spot him in the driveway before Holly rushes to embrace him. Ivy is on the phone in an instant, contacting her stepfather, Neil (Courtney B. Vance). Everyone in the family is on edge. Holly demands a drug test if Ben is going to stay the night. These kinds of reactions tell us all we need to know to understand the extremity of the chaos Ben's addiction has sown in the family.

Ben's story is slowly revealed, piecemeal, as he and Holly embrace a Christmas Eve journey that turns into a dark night of the soul. First it's to the mall for a Christmas sweater, where Holly gets



Julia Roberts and Lucas Hedges star in "Ben Is Back," the story of the Christmastime homecoming of a young man with substance abuse issues.

them kicked out of a department store for demanding to search his clothing for drugs.

Ben is also spotted by old friends, setting off a chain of increasingly dangerous events, ultimately leading to a confrontation with someone from his past

to whom he owes a debt.

The theme Hedges' script hammers again and again is the flexible, fallible nature of honesty and truth. Ben professes that "rigorous honesty" is the only way he can get through the day — demanding to buy his own

presents for his younger brother and sister — but Hedges plants seeds of doubt about Ben's honesty throughout. A furtive phone call casts a pall over the endearing and funny words he shares during a Narcotics Anonymous meeting. He gestures toward

letting his mother in; he puts on a good show, letting details slip, letting her see the darker side of him. But no one ever knows what he's thinking, and for Holly, that's the mystery she has to unravel over one long, cold Christmas Eve.

When Holly reaches out for help to a fellow mother of an addict, her friend says frankly, "We can't save them, but we have to try." This is the motivation that keeps Holly returning again and again, turning the car around. It's codependency, and it's unconditional love. Holly struggles with two conflicting forces: her overwhelming instinct to protect her child, and her knowledge that she's enabling Ben's behavior, despite her family's protestation.

Roberts gives one of her most sensitive and haunting performances yet, and her face is her most expressive tool — her wide grin at the sight of her son, her panic and despair at the smallest transgressions. She is sensational across from Hedges, who portrays Ben with a sense of haunted, faintive anguish. He mourns his past, present and future, while his mother desperately tries to wake him up. Peter Hedges has crafted an exquisitely devastating family story for the opiate era that quietly asks us to do the same.

"Ben Is Back" is rated R for language throughout and some drug use. Running time: 103 minutes.

FROM PAGE 36

"We were spared, thankfully," she says. "But a lot of my very good friends were not, and a lot of my community was not, so it's a very strange time."

She's been spending a lot of that time on the phone with her girlfriends who lost their homes, urging them to feel comfortable sharing their feelings about the loss. "They all have great attitudes about it, but I've been saying, on the day you wake up and realize 'Oh my God, my favorite sweater is gone,' call me. Because I'll be there for you for that conversation. There's room for all of that."

Home has always been central for Roberts, who has a reputation for being selective about work because she does not like to spend time away from her husband, cinematographer Danny Moder, and their children, 14-year-old twins Hazel and Phinnaeus and Henry, 11.

"I do like to be with my family, and I feel like my kids are young and there'll be a time when it's not as feasible for all five of us to be together as much as we are now," she says. "But it also has to do with the fact that the kind of work that I do will follow me around forever — each choice will follow me around forever. So I want to be able to really stand by each little cement stone I put down. Of all that I have been able to accomplish, I feel super-proud of that. I don't go, 'Oh, that was a bad patch.' Because I do put a lot of consideration into the jobs that I take."

This is why Peter Hedges, who wrote and directed "Ben Is Back," feared it would be difficult to attract the actress' interest in his movie. He started envisioning her in the role after watching "Wonder," the 2017 breakout hit family drama in which she played the mother to a boy with facial fractures.

"But then I thought, 'Of course, I'm never gonna get her for the film, because



Julia Roberts and Lucas Hedges star in the addiction drama "Ben Is Back."

she's very selective about what she does' and I knew enough about her to know that she doesn't like to be away from her kids during the school year — so it just wasn't ever gonna happen," the filmmaker recalls over the telephone.

Nonetheless, Hedges decided to take a swing, sending Roberts his screenplay along with a letter that said something like: "I've tried to write interesting mothers all of my career, but this is my favorite mother I've ever written. I feel like you could be both ferocious in this part and fragile, and if you'd do the film, we'd have the best chance of it reaching the most people."

To his surprise, Roberts responded, and within days, he flew to California to

meet the actress. Then, on Sept. 11, at 8:30 a.m. EST — he has the time committed to memory — she sent him a text message telling him she was officially in.

Roberts prides herself on being particular in her decision-making. "I'm a person who's very specific," she says. "I'm not going to say 'yes' and get talked into a 'no.' With my kids, I believe that tells them you are a person of conviction and that you have given consideration to your question. It's important that they know if they ask me a question, that my answer is my true answer, not an answer you can wear out in 20 minutes. I think it makes you feel safe."

"I think I'm clear," she continues. "I don't think I'm stubborn. It's not that I

can't change my mind if someone says 'But have you considered —' and they present something meaningful to me. But I am a person who is considerate. I don't just go, 'Oh, yeah!'"

"Ben Is Back" is one of a few recent projects in which Roberts has explored motherhood, though she says that hasn't been a conscious choice. Still, her son, Henry, picked up on the theme, and when she told her family she'd accepted the "Ben Is Back" role, he replied: "Mom, how come you're always in movies where someone is playing your son?"

"That's when I thought to myself, 'I'm gonna get Lucas (Hedges) over here so they can all know each other,'" Roberts says. "Then it's not just some person in some scenario — it's mom and Lucas going off to New York to do this movie."

Accordingly, Roberts requested that rehearsals for the film take place at her residence in Malibu. She felt that inviting her colleagues into her home would give them a sense of who she was in a truncated amount of time. And it gave her the opportunity to see them differently too — Peter Hedges broke out his ukulele and started playing with Hazel, while Lucas went surfing with her other kids down at the beach.

"To be in the home of arguably one of the biggest stars in our era and see that in her house, there's such balance — such regard for every kid, every pet, every corner of every room — I was there for too long for that to have been an act," the filmmaker says with a laugh. "I learned that one of our greatest actresses has figured out how to live a great life. The curtain would have been pulled back if it wasn't true."

For his son, the time served to de-glamorize Roberts. "So when I was acting with her later, I didn't experience — as much as an actress, I experienced her as a mother," Lucas says.

WEEKEND: BOOKS

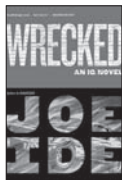
Ide skillfully injects humor into crime tale 'Wrecked'

BY PATRICK ANDERSON
Special to The Washington Post

Joe Ide was 58 when he published his first novel, "IQ," two years ago. Before that he'd been a school teacher and a screenwriter. Being a novelist suits him well. "IQ" won the Anthony, Macavity and Shamus awards for outstanding crime-fiction debut. Ide is a Japanese American who grew up in an African-American section of South Central Los Angeles. He has said this experience helped him create his main character, Isaiah Quintabe (IQ), a young black man who, after an interlude of youthful crime, became a private detective.

In "Wrecked," the third installment of the IQ series, Quintabe is back, slowly building his business in Long Beach, Calif., when an attractive young woman named Grace asks his help in finding her mother, whom she hasn't seen for 10 years. Grace is a penniless artist who can't pay him, but Isaiah likes her too much to refuse her, even after he learns

that her mother, Sarah, is in deep trouble with a group of ex-military men, led by Stan Walczak, the founder of a global security firm (think Blackwater).



that her mother, Sarah, is in deep trouble with a group of ex-military men, led by Stan Walczak, the founder of a global security firm (think Blackwater). Sarah and Walczak were once lovers. Sarah has incriminating evidence from Abu Ghraib that proves that he and his colleagues tortured prisoners there. She's demanded \$1 million for it. Walczak could pay her but would rather kill her. He summons four ruthless cronies from Abu Ghraib to do just that.

Despite the danger, Isaiah takes the case and falls for Grace although he's never had a white girlfriend and fears rejection. As it turns out, Grace is unconcerned about race — she likes IQ a lot — but she's wary of involvement and wants

only to find her mother. Nonetheless, their growing attraction inspires a touching portrait of love and its discontents.

Grace's life has not been easy. In a flashback we see her at age 15 when she was sent to live with foster parents. There was a lecherous foster father who wouldn't leave her alone. One day when his wife was away he told the girl he had \$5,000 in cash and that they could run off to San Francisco and have some fun. Instead, Grace threatens to call the police and denounce him as a pedophile. Soon she goes forth to make her way in the world with that \$5,000 in hand.

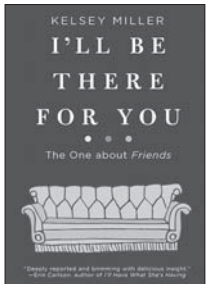
Isaiah's love is sorely tested when he's captured by Walczak's gang and tortured. He won't talk, even during abuse and agonizing to read. In a more enjoyable episode, written with equal skill, Ide has Walczak and his thugs pursue Isaiah and Grace through the Burning Man extravaganza in the Arizona desert.

Ide delights in injecting moments of humor into his tale of crime and violence.

Isaiah's friend Dodson, having survived a life of crime, is cursed with the mother-in-law from hell. "You were a useless bum before and now you're a useless bum with a bullet hole in you." Strange creatures appear: "Sylvia knew instantly that in a prior life, she and Chester had been vampires together in New Orleans." A woman looks around a bar and declares she's "seen better faces in a fish tank."

If I had any complaint about "Wrecked," it was that its abundance of characters and subplots sometimes felt like too much of a good thing. But I came to accept Ide's excesses as the result of his ambition, his urge to share all that he has seen and felt and known.

The wonder of love, the cruelty of war, the black world he knows well, the music he loves (Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, George Shearing) — all the beauty and cruelty and craziness he fled away in his mind before he began writing these novels. With "Wrecked," Ide confirms that he's among the most original new voices in today's crime fiction.



I'll Be There For You
Kelsey Miller

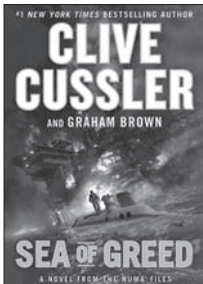
Miller has written the quintessential fan book for those obsessed with the hit TV sitcom "Friends." "I'll Be There For You" gives readers an insider's look at what it takes to launch a show that not only had an impact on a decade of broadcast television, but also remains a pop culture icon.

Miller leads readers through insider scoop and includes various behind-the-scenes interviews. She highlights trends such as the "Rachel" haircut and high-profile celebrity guest appearances, but doesn't ignore the bad.

One theme that weaves through the book is the camaraderie among the leading actors. Spearheaded by Lisa Kudrow and David Schwimmer, they were among the first to insist on equal pay for cast members. And Courteney Cox implemented the unofficial "all for one" agreement with the group. If one left, the other five would follow.

Miller points out that "Friends," which debuted in 1994 and ran for 10 seasons, has withstood the test of time. Once Netflix offered the show to subscribers, a new generation began binge-watching six friends trying to make it in New York City.

—Lincee Ray/AP



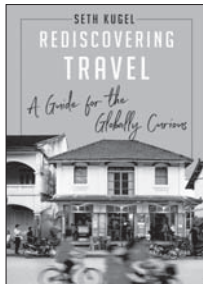
Sea of Greed
Clive Cussler and Graham Brown

Kurt Austin runs the Special Assignments team for the National Underwater and Marine Agency (NUMA). He's working near the Gulf of Mexico with Joe Zavala, his partner and best friend, when they hear a loud explosion from more than 12 miles away. They hurry to the site to discover burning oil rigs. The two men rescue several workers, but when they leave the area, they both notice the fire doesn't burn like a standard oil fire.

They want answers but are called back to Washington for another assignment. The president wants NUMA to uncover the mysterious depletion of the world's oil. Sites that weeks ago appeared to have oil in abundance suddenly run dry, and it's been happening all over the world. When the news leaks about the sudden lack of oil, prices will skyrocket and potentially bankrupt major nations that rely on the substance to fuel their economies. Can NUMA uncover the truth and once again save the world?

The thought of the world running out of oil is terrifying, and that, along with the wonderful cast of characters, makes this one of the better entries in the NUMA Files series.

—Jeff Ayers/AP



Rediscovering Travel
Seth Kugel

Whether or not you're familiar with Kugel's amusing, yet never cloying, writing; his self-deprecating and hilarious storytelling; and his inner struggle between his fear of talking to strangers and his compulsion for out-of-the-way adventures, "Rediscovering Travel" will feel as comfortable as your favorite pair of woolly socks. He'll charm you with his endearing anecdotes about his travels.

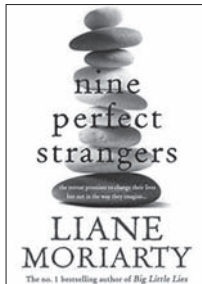
About South Carolina: "Even if you've just eaten, you don't pass up a barbecue buffet at a place called Hog Heaven that has a sign featuring three pigs in bibs and halos."

About the weather: "A travel day that rains rainy is like a piece of chocolate I've dropped on the floor. It's significantly less appealing, but I'll be damned if I'm going to throw it away."

But despite Kugel's delightful writing, his book doesn't fulfill his publisher's intended promise of becoming an "indispensable" travel companion that conveys "how to make the most of new digital technologies without being shackled to them."

It might be best to accept the highly readable "Rediscovering Travel" for what it is — a funny, inspiring and well-crafted collection of travel essays.

—Kim Curtis/AP



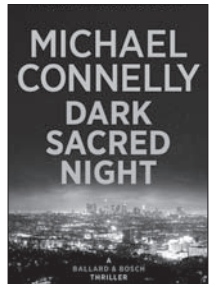
Nine Perfect Strangers
Liane Moriarty

"Big Little Lies" author Moriarty's latest novel, "Nine Perfect Strangers," is a locked-door mystery, but the mystery itself remains a mystery for much of the book. There's a general sense of foreboding that builds, but what it's building to and which of the nine is and isn't a victim is a perplexing puzzle.

The titular strangers converge on a remote luxury health resort, Tranquillum House, where they're promised not just rejuvenation, but reinvention. Many are unhappy with their physical selves. Most are recovering from emotional wounds.

The group is asked to observe a "noble silence" meant to clear everyone's heads. The silence envelops the group as it becomes increasingly clear to readers they should be bolting for the exits. As the staff begins manipulating the guests in truly bizarre ways, the strangers form opinions of the other characters based on their observations, insecurities and vulnerabilities. Tranquillum House becomes a microcosm of the macro world as stress and vitriol cause the characters to fall back on habitual coping mechanisms and flock to others who might share their views.

—Tayla Burney
Special to The Washington Post



Dark Sacred Night
Michael Connelly

Los Angeles Police Department detective Renee Ballard was given the graveyard shift after reporting her former partner for harassment.

One late evening she sees someone going through old file cabinets and confronting him. He tells her his name is Harry Bosch and he's working on a cold case he wants to solve involving the murder of a 15-year-old runaway. Even though he's retired from the LAPD, he's working for the San Fernando police department as a reserve officer tackling unsolved crimes. After Bosch tells Ballard the details, she informs Bosch that he needs to leave since they could both get into trouble.

Ballard offers to assist in the investigation. She and Bosch soon become hesitant partners. They will have to work together to build trust, but obstacles in both the cold case and current investigations will quickly put their relationship to the test.

The cases that Ballard and Bosch tackle would be enough to recommend this story, but what makes Connelly so much better than most crime fiction writers is that his police detectives are human and real. The combination is quality.

—Jeff Ayers/AP

WEEKEND: TELEVISION & DVD

NEW ON DVD

"Mission: Impossible - Fallout": The latest offering in the franchise born out of the '60s TV series has Ethan Hunt (Tom Cruise) and his IMF team (Simon Pegg, Ving Rhames) facing a nuclear threat at the hands of an old enemy. Their efforts to keep the world from exploding get assistance from familiar allies such as Ilsa Faust (Rebecca Ferguson), who was a big part of "Rogue Nation."

The film is wall-to-wall action with Cruise at the heart of each scene doing his own stunts. He spent a year learning to fly a helicopter just so he could make the final chase scene as realistic as possible. Instead of the standard long shots or camera views from the back of the pilot's head, there is no doubt it is Cruise manning the controls. The same goes for the high-speed motorcycle chases and the high-altitude parachute jump.

The relentless action sequences make "Fallout" the best action movie of the year.



Paramount Pictures

Henry Cavill and Tom Cruise are two of the stars of "Mission: Impossible - Fallout."

"Westworld: The Complete Second Season": The series used the 1973 film of the same name as the basis for the stories set in the theme park where visitors can live out any fantasy they want in a Wild West town.

Everything changes when the android hosts do. The time of being nothing more than mechanical targets of physical, verbal and sexual abuse is over. At the center is Dolores (Evan Rachel Wood), who leads an uprising while trying to cope with what is happening to her.

Not only is "Westworld" a brilliantly produced series that plays out against a lavish backdrop, it is one of the smartest programs on television. Each week the show explores grand ideas about life, love, existence, control and power. But that never gets in the way of great action by a superb cast.

Also new on DVD:

"The Handmaid's Tale: Season Two": Elisabeth Moss stars in the series about a future world that has become a theocratic dictatorial society.

"God Bless the Broken Road": Young mother struggles to raise her daughter on her own after losing her husband in Afghanistan. Lindsay Pulsipher stars.

"All the Creatures Were Stirring": Joyful spirit of the holidays takes one dark turn after another. Constance Wu stars.

"I'll Be Next Door for Christmas":

Family's celebration of the holidays is so excessive a teen hires a fake family to fool her new boyfriend.

"Til Death Do Us Part": Woman who believes she has escaped from an abusive marriage is terrorized again. Taye Diggs stars.

"The Nun": A priest with a haunted past is sent to investigate a nun's suicide at an abbey in Romania.

"Operation Finale": Film based on the true story of the 1960 covert mission to infiltrate Argentina and capture Adolf Eichmann. Oscar Isaac stars.

"Ride": Bella Thorne stars in this tale of a late-night ride that turns dark and deadly.

"Yellowstone - Season One": Series chronicles the owners of the largest contiguous cattle ranch in the United States. Kevin Costner stars.

"The Happytime Murders": Puppet meet solve mystery behind deaths of a children's show's stars. Melissa McCarthy stars.

— Rick Bentley/Tribune News Service



JASON ELIAS/Animal Planet

From left, Terri, Robert and Bindi Irwin are carrying on "Crocodile Hunter" Steve Irwin's legacy with a wildlife series for Animal Planet, "Crikey! It's the Irwins." The show airs statewide.

Dedication to conservation

Terri Irwin carrying on the work of late husband Steve

BY LUAINNE LEE
Tribune News Service

It's not every day you can stop off at a tiny zoo in the middle of nowhere and find the love you life. But that happened to Terri Irwin. Irwin is the widow of the famous "Crocodile Hunter" Steve Irwin, who was killed 12 years ago by a poisonous stingray.

Terri Irwin is carrying on his work which began, she says, when she visited Queensland, Australia, with some friends 27 years ago. "I was kind of asleep in the car. And they said, 'You want to stop and see this little wildlife park?' And I thought, 'Oh, that's probably kind of sad. I don't know if I want to go in.'"

"Then I thought, 'Oh, I don't want to not see it, I've come all this way.' So I went in," she recalls.

"And it opened up to small but beautiful grounds — with peacocks and kangaroos wandering around. And there was a man at a demonstration talking about crocodiles. And he said things about crocodiles I didn't know. Like he said they're really beautiful mothers, they're very caring toward their offspring and very compassionate toward each other. When crocodiles find a mate, they're very kind to each other. I thought, 'I never would've thought that about crocodiles.' I went and talked to this man some more. And we ended up talking all day. And, of course, that was Steve."

At that time Terri had no interest in leaving her home in Oregon and her job as head of her family's construction-related business, a position she'd assumed at 20. Always goal-oriented, Irwin had managed to double up on her mortgage payments, paying for her home free and clear at 25. (She'd majored in business but always nurtured a passion for animals.)

"The family business afforded me the ability to do wildlife work and I worked with predatory mammals in the states, and so Steve and I had a lot in common

when we met. I was also working at an emergency veterinary hospital treating animals at night and on the weekends. I worked as a vet nurse, worked in business and had my own rehabilitation facility for wildlife. I was very busy and very happy. That's what Steve and I had in common and really hit it off."

She never thought anything would come of it. After all, they lived 7,000 miles apart. "When I would date someone from another town I would say, 'Don't get too serious because I will never move.' When I met Steve I really wasn't looking. I thought, 'I don't know if I'm going to get married. I'm happy with my life. I'm busy.' Then I met Steve and it all changed instantly."

In a life full of permutations, her life has changed again. She and her daughter, Bindi, 20, and son, Robert, 14, are starring in a new series, "Crikey! It's the Irwins," airing on Animal Planet. Steve Irwin's original show, "The Crocodile Hunter," was broadcast on the same channel, and Terri says they never lost touch.

"And it just seemed like the stars lined up," says Irwin. "They were now looking for the type of work that we've been doing all along to be back on television. Bindi and Robert are old enough now. Bindi's through school, and Robert is two years ahead in school, so he's almost done now. And it seems like the perfect time for that life-work balance," she says.

"And no time is more important

than now to get the message out about protecting our wildlife and wild places because we're starting to realize that to have clean water and fresh air and these resources, we have to protect them."

A year ago, she says, she was approached by Animal Planet. "They said, 'Would you ever want to do another show about how you're carrying on Steve's legacy?' And we said, 'Absolutely, we'd be happy because these folks are like family with us and Steve and I worked with them for over 10 years.'"

Both Bindi and Robert share their dad's Australian accent, but Terri still sounds like she's fresh out of Eugene, Ore. As unusual as her first encounter with Irwin was, she says it was his cocky Aussie attitude that attracted her.

At their first meeting, she remembers, "He was a bit cheeky. He said to me, 'Would you like to meet my girlfriend?' I said, 'Sure,' and thought, 'Oh, no, he has a girlfriend.' And he said, 'Hey, Sue.' And out came his little dog, Suey. That was his way of letting me know that he was single too."

A month after they met, Steve trekked to Oregon to visit her and her relatives on Thanksgiving. "And all my family liked him. He could talk football, and he helped with the dishes, and he just did everything. He was so lovely. He was wonderful, and as the years went by, we were back and forth a bit."

Eight months after visiting that remote little zoo, Terri and Steve Irwin were married.



'They were looking for the type of work that we've been doing all along to be back on television.'

Terri Irwin
on Animal Planet's offer of a new nature show for the Irwin family

WEEKEND: HEALTH & FITNESS



Happy Trails

Tips for staying safe during winter activities

By PETER MADSEN ✽ *The Bulletin* (Bend, Ore.)

With the weather tilting toward winter, practicing safety on hiking trails is as important as ever. Temperatures are dipping below freezing and snow can obscure trails at higher elevations, and there are even fewer well-lit hours for outdoor adventures.

Accordingly, it's important to hit hiking trails and walking paths prepared.

Jana Johnson, recreation team leader of the Bend-Fort Rock Ranger District of the Deschutes National Forest in Oregon, and Nathan Humphrey, a lifelong skier, mountaineer and REI employee, are here to help.

(Stock photo)

Be visible

Dressing in neon shades of orange and yellow isn't just for cyclists wanting to be seen on the road. It's a good idea for being highly visible deep in the woods, particularly where hunters may be lying in wait for other animals.

Being easily spotted will not only aid in rescue efforts if you get into trouble, but unnatural colors that pop will also make you visible to an over-eager hunter.

"It's so when you're in the woods and (hunters) hear crunching, crunching, and branches are moving and they see your brown backpack with a white patch on it — wearing orange just removes all doubt that you're wildlife," Johnson said.

A headlamp, a spare set of batteries — and perhaps a backup headlamp — are also vital additions to a winter daypack, especially if an afternoon hike takes longer than expected. Humphrey recommends headlamps that project 200 lumens.

Choose the right gear

Many winter hikers wear up to four layers of clothing. Base layer items come in many forms, such as tops, long johns, glove liners and so on.

What all base layers should do is wick moisture away from the body, which will keep you dry and warm. Synthetic fabrics are effective, but Humphrey is a fan of merino wool.

"Wool fabric is really nice because it's a natural fiber, so it kind of adjusts to your body temperature," Humphrey said. He also recommends items that feature built-in wind-proofing.

Cotton base layers should be avoided because the material retains moisture, which can leave you feeling clammy and chilled.

Above the base layer you can add additional non-cotton items or head right for the down insulation, which comes in a variety of fill counts. Consider a down vest, which keeps your torso warm without making your arms feel bulky, Humphrey said.

When the going gets snowy or icy, pulling on a pair of traction cleats can add some much-needed grip. The cleats attach to the bottom of your footwear and are held taut by stretchy or adjustable cords.

Warm the extremities

Hand and toe warmers, which are chemical packets that create heat when activated, are great to slip into gloves and boots, Johnson said. Toe warmers often resemble shoe inserts.

"Put toe warmers on before your feet get cold, like when you're getting ready that morning or you're in your car," Johnson said. "If you wait until you're already cold, they're less effective. But if your feet are warm from the get-go, they'll stay warm. They're complete game-changers for me in winter, because I have bad circulation."

Hypothermia can lead to loss of extremities and death. It happens when your body cools faster than it can produce heat and your body temperature drops below 95 degrees, according to the Mayo Clinic.

While being exposed to cold weather or cold water can cause hypothermia, the condition can also happen during prolonged exposure to temperatures below 50 degrees.

Signs and symptoms of hypothermia usually happen gradually and may include shivering, slurred speech, shallow breathing, clumsiness, drowsiness and short-term memory loss, according to the nonprofit health center.

Stay hydrated

Cooler temperatures might lull you into thinking you won't need that extra bottle of water on a hike, but bring it — especially if you're going to be on a long one.

Although you're not sweating as much as you would during a hot day, the body loses moisture through respiration. In cold weather, the body doesn't trigger the thirst impulse in the same way it does when it's dehydrated in warm weather.

Thermoses' insulation keep water from turning to ice, as do padded liners that fit over water bottles like big koozies.

If you're drinking from a hydration pack, the water will likely freeze in the hose if it's not insulated, Johnson said.

Even though the hose to her water bladder is lined, she likes to blow air into the line after she takes a sip as an added precaution.

"Once your hose freezes, you probably won't be drinking much," Johnson said.

Keep with the course

With the change of seasons, the more elevated sections of your favorite hikes might be covered in snow that renders them unrecognizable. If you do find yourself momentarily disoriented, remain calm.

"If you get to the top of something and you don't really know where you are, don't panic," Johnson said. "Don't move. No. 1: Look around. Are there any clues?"

Look for any evidence of where the trail might continue, such as consistent tracks in the snow.

If there are only one or two tracks, the people who made them might not necessarily know where they're going, either. Look, too, for a trail corridor that cuts through the trees. Otherwise, retrace your steps to where you were confident you were on the trail, Johnson said.

A great way to navigate in the woods is by using a GPS device. Smartphone apps such as Avenza Maps and Trailforks offer mapping with GPS capabilities. Be aware that the cold has a way of zapping phone battery life, Johnson said.

Johnson and Humphrey agree that knowing how to use time-tested navigational tools — a map and compass — is the surest way out of a pickle.

WEEKEND: FAMILY

Toys that stack up

Pediatricians prefer blocks, even boxes, over high-tech devices

BY LINDSEY TANNER
Associated Press

Skip the costly electronic games and flashy digital gizmos. Pediatricians say the best toys for tots are old-fashioned hands-on playthings that young children can enjoy with parents — things like blocks, puzzles, even throwaway cardboard boxes — that spark imagination and creativity.

"A cardboard box can be used to draw on, or made into a house," said Dr. Alan Mendelsohn, co-author of a new report on selecting toys for young children, up to around age 5.

Many parents feel pressured by ads promoting tablet-based toys and games as educational and brain-stimulating, but there's not much science to back up those claims, Mendelsohn said. Their main misconception: "The toy that is best is the one that is the most expensive or has the most bells and whistles or is the most technologically sophisticated."

Simpler hands-on toys that parents and young children can play with together are preferable for healthy development, said Mendelsohn, a pediatrician at NYU Langone Health in New York.

The report published Dec. 3 by the American Academy of Pediatrics cites studies suggesting that heavy use of electronic media may interfere with children's speech and language development, replace important playtime with parents and lead to obesity.

Studies also have found that more than 90 percent of U.S. kids have used mobile devices, and most started using them before age 1.

The pediatricians' group recommends no screen time for children up to age 2, and says total screen time including TV and computer use should be less than one hour daily for ages 2 and older.

"A little bit of screen time here and there is unlikely to have much harm if a child otherwise has other activity," Mendelsohn said. But he added that screen time can overwhelm young children and is difficult to limit and control.

The academy's website offers suggestions on ideal toys for young children, including balls, puzzles, coloring books and card games.

Shopping recently at Dancing Bear Toys in Asheville, N.C., a store that doesn't sell electronic toys, Leah Graham Stewart said she supports the academy's advice even if avoiding digital toys and games is tough.

She said she's noticed her two young boys tend to misbehave after playing on an iPad she typically reserves for long airplane rides. "We try to keep it as minimal as possible," Graham Stewart said. "I just tell them to go outside and play."

Erika Evers, Dancing Bear's co-owner, said the store's mission is to give kids an alternative to tech toys.

"Not that video games and electronic toys don't have their place — in moderation, in our opinion," she said. "But we feel like kids really need opportunities to socialize and interact with their environment in a way that is hands-on and tangible."



THE MEAT AND POTATOES OF LIFE

Lisa Smith Molinari



Trying to keep the shame on the shelf

When it comes to trends, I operate on a standard five-to-10-year delay. Hence, I refer to ink cartridges as "printer ribbons." I've always wanted that hairstyle Jennifer Aniston had on "Friends," and I still own a pair of dark-washed jeans. So, it's no surprise that I never picked up on The Elf on the Shelf craze.

I didn't even hear about that particular holiday phenomenon until 2009, while our family was stationed in Germany. Apparently, the elf was Santa's spy, flying to the North Pole every night to report back on who's been naughty or nice, and returning to a new location each morning, in increasingly funny scenarios that delighted her children. Making snow angels in rainbow sprinkles on the countertop, splashing in a mini-marshmallow bubble bath with Buzz Lightyear, and catching goldfish crackers in the toilet with a candy cane fishing pole.

This was the same mom who also baked a different cookie for her kids every day for "The Twelve Cookies of Christmas" and who surprised her kids with a green glitter and chocolate coin leprechaun ransack of their house every St. Patrick's Day — so I should have known better. But instead, I felt terrible.

"How did I miss this Elf on the Shelf thing?" I wondered. "Am I just too lazy to be a good mother? Do my kids feel deprived of their rightful share of holiday fun? Will they grow up so full of resentment that they will lead lives of crime and end up in prison making license plates and eating contraband honey buns with plastic sporks?"

Like I said, I just can't resist a guilt trip.

After moving back to the States, I broke down and bought a knockoff elf, but by that time our kids were old enough to know that Santa didn't come down the chimney, much less have spies. Regardless, as an act of Christmas contrition, I wrapped the doll's felt and wire arms around the ceiling fan blade, fully intending to finally teach my children the timelessness tradition of the Elf on the Shelf.

And that is where he stayed for the entire month.

Rather than alleviate my guilt, bringing that blasted elf into our home only brought me more parenting disgrace. I found it impossible to remember to move the elf at night, much less pose him in witty scenarios to entertain the kids. When I checked the internet for ideas, I only ended up feeling worse about myself for getting sucked into perusing Pinterest boards with titles like "The 100 Most Inappropriate Elf on a Shelf Ideas for Adults Only."

Childish giggling only amplified my shame.

After Christmas, I plucked our elf from his fan blade confinement, brushed off a month's worth of dust before storing him away, and wallowed in self-loathing.

This year, while sorting through our boxes of Christmas decorations, I found the elf crumpled against a snow globe, one leg bent at an unnatural angle. I took him out and hooked his felt and wire arms over the banister garland, and that is where he will probably stay until the new year.

I have come to accept the irony that, although I lack the discipline it takes to move a tiny elf from shelf to shelf, I always manage to drag a load parental guilt around with me everywhere I go.

Is it any wonder I'm a Catholic?

Read more of Lisa Smith Molinari's columns at:
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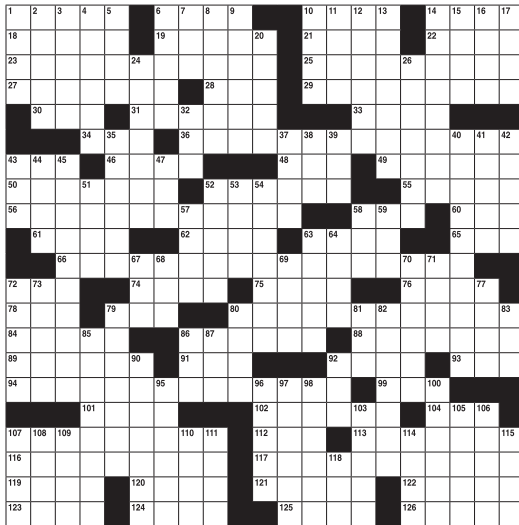
WEEKEND: CROSSWORD AND COMICS

NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

REPRESENT!

BY PAUL COULTER / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

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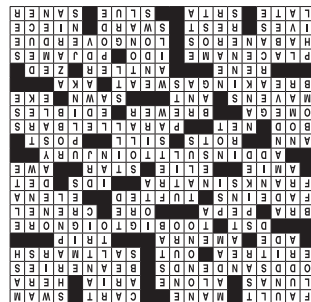
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FACES

'Vice' grabs 6 Golden Globe nominations

Cheney biopic up for best actor, picture (comedy); 'American Crime Story' leads diverse TV selections

By JAKE COYLE
Associated Press

Adam McKay's Dick Cheney biopic "Vice" seized control of the 76th annual Golden Globe Awards with a leading six nominations, narrowly edging Bradley Cooper's tear-jerking revival "A Star Is Born," the interracial road-trip drama "Green Book" and the period romp "The Favourite."

"Vice" topped all contenders Thursday in nominations announced in Beverly Hills, Calif., including best picture, comedy and best actor nominations for Christian Bale's nearly unrecognizable performance as the former vice president. It also earned nominations for Amy Adams' Lynne Cheney, Sam Rockwell's George W. Bush and both the screenplay and direction by McKay, the veteran comedy filmmaker who once skewered politicians as a "Saturday Night Live" writer.

For even the often-quirky selections of the Hollywood Foreign Press Association, a collection of 88 mostly less-known freelance film journalists, the strong support for "Vice" (which arrives in theaters on Dec. 25) was a surprise. Even its categorization of the film — a highly critical portrait of Cheney as a power-hungry, behind-the-scenes tyrant — as a comedy raised some eyebrows, just as Globes recent comedy selections "Get Out" and "The Martian" did.

"It's a movie that's a lot like the times we live in. There's part of it that's absurdist and comedic, and then there's another part of it that's darkly tragic and dramatic, but they are definitely both there," said McKay by phone from London.

But it was far from a runaway win for "Vice," since the press association typically spread its awards around. Oscar front-runners "A Star Is Born," "Green Book" and "The Favourite" trailed close behind with five nominations each.

On the television side, awards were even more widely dispersed among the likes of "The Americans," "Barry," "Homeland," "The Kominsky Method" and "The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel." Leading all small-screen nominees was the FX anthology series "The Assassination of Gianni Versace: American Crime Story" with four nods.

For the first time, FX bested heavyweights like HBO, Netflix and Amazon with a network-best 10 nods, even though the exalted second season of its "Atlanta" received only a single nod, for Donald Glover's acting.

The Hollywood Foreign Press doesn't consider foreign-language films for best film, so Alfonso Cuarón's acclaimed Netflix drama "Roma" was left out of the Globes' top category. It was nominated for best screenplay, best director and best foreign language film.

For the first time, the Globes nominated three films directed by African-American filmmakers for best picture, drama: Ryan Coogler's superhero sensation "Black Panther," Spike Lee's urgent white nationalist drama "BlacKkKlansman" and Barry



CHRIS PIZZELLO, INVISION/AP

Sandra Oh, left, and Andy Samberg will share host duties at the Golden Globes ceremony Jan. 6.

Jenkins' James Baldwin adaptation "If Beale Street Could Talk." The other nominees are "A Star Is Born" and the Freddie Mercury biopic "Bohemian Rhapsody."

All earned nods in other categories, too, including Rami Malek's prosthetic tooth-aided performance as Mercury, and the leading turn by John David Washington in "BlacKkKlansman."

While Sam Elliott's supporting performance in "A Star Is Born" was unexpectedly overlooked, the Warner Bros. hit (which elected to compete on the more hefty drama side of the Globes despite its many songs) earned the expected nods for Lady Gaga, Bradley Cooper, as both actor and director, and the song "The Shallow."

Up for best picture comedy alongside "Vice" are Yorgos Lanthimos' palace power struggle "The Favourite," Peter Farrelly's divisive crowd-pleaser "Green Book," the upcoming "Mary Poppins Returns" and the rom-com hit "Crazy Rich Asians."

The Oscar path for both "Green Book" and "The Favourite" appeared to be solidified, with nods for all of the leads for each: Viggo Mortensen and Mahershala Ali for "Green Book," and Olivia Colman, Rachel Weisz and Emma Stone for "The Favourite."

Performers like Constance Wu ("Crazy Rich Asians"), Regina King ("Beale Street"), Ali and Washington, insured a somewhat diverse field of nominees. Lee was nominated for directing "BlacKkKlansman," three decades after last being included in the category for "Do the Right Thing."

But the Globes didn't nominate any female filmmakers for best director, and none of the 10 best picture nominees was helmed by a woman.

Damien Chazelle's Neil Armstrong biopic "First Man" failed to lift off, scoring neither a best film nod, nor one for Ryan Gosling's leading performance. (It did land nominations for Claire Foy and its score.) The news was worse for Steve McQueen's heist thriller "Widows," which was shut out entirely.

Actors Andy Samberg and Sandra Oh were announced as hosts for the Jan. 6 ceremony.

Golden Globe Awards nominees

FILM

Drama:

"Black Panther," "BlacKkKlansman," "Bohemian Rhapsody," "If Beale Street Could Talk," "A Star Is Born"

Actress, Drama:

Glenn Close, "The Wife"; Lady Gaga, "A Star Is Born"; Nicole Kidman, "Destroyer"; Melissa McCarthy, "Can You Ever Forgive Me?"; Rosamund Pike, "A Private War"

Actor, Drama:

Bradley Cooper, "A Star Is Born"; Willem Dafoe, "At Eternity's Gate"; Lucas Hedges, "Boy Erased"; Rami Malek, "Bohemian Rhapsody"; John David Washington, "BlacKkKlansman"

Comedy or Musical:

"Crazy Rich Asians," "The Favourite," "Green Book," "Mary Poppins Returns," "Vice"

Actress, Comedy or Musical:

Emily Blunt, "Mary Poppins Returns"; Olivia Colman, "The Favorite"; Elsie Fisher, "Eighteenth Grade"; Charlize Theron, "Tully"; Constance Wu, "Crazy Rich Asians"

Actor, Comedy or Musical:

Christian Bale, "Vice"; Lin-Manuel Miranda, "Mary Poppins Returns"; Viggo Mortensen, "Green Book"; Robert Redford, "The Old Man and the Gun"; John C. Reilly, "Stan & Ollie"

Animated Film:

"Incredibles 2," "Isle of Dogs," "Mirai," "Ralph Breaks the Internet," "Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse"

Foreign Language:

"Capernaum," "Gili," "Never Look Away," "Roma," "Shoplifters"

Actress-Supporting Role, Motion Picture:

Amy Adams, "Vice"; Claire Foy, "First Man"; Regina King, "If Beale Street Could Talk"; Emma Stone, "The Favourite"; Rachel Weisz, "The Favourite"

Actor-Supporting Role, Motion Picture:

Mahershala Ali, "A Quiet Book"; Timothee Chalamet, "Beautiful Boy"; Adam Driver, "BlacKkKlansman"; Richard E. Grant, "Can You Ever Forgive Me?"; Sam Rockwell, "Vice"

Director, Motion Picture:

Bradley Cooper, "A Star Is Born"; Alfonso Cuarón, "Roma"; Peter Farrelly, "Green Book"; Spike Lee, "BlacKkKlansman"; Adam McKay, "Vice"

Screenplay, Motion Picture:

Alfonso Cuarón, "Roma"; Deborah Davis and Tony McNamara, "The Favourite"; Barry Jenkins, "If Beale Street Could Talk"; Adam McKay, "Vice"; Nick Vallelonga, Brian Currie, Peter Farrelly, "Green Book"

Original Score, Motion Picture:

Marco Beltrami, "A Quiet Place"; Alexandre Desplat, "Isle of Dogs"; Ludwig Goransson, "Black Panther"; Justin Hurwitz, "The Favourite"; Marc Shaiman, "Mary Poppins Returns"

Original Song, Motion Picture:

"All the Stars," "Girls in the Movies," "Requiem for a Private War," "Revelation," "Shallow"

TELEVISION

Drama:

"The Americans," "Bodyguard," "Homeland," "Killing Eve," "Pose"

Actress, TV Series-Drama:

Caitriona Balfe, "Outlander"; Elisabeth Moss, "The Handmaid's Tale"; Sandra Oh, "Killing Eve"; Julia Roberts, "Homeland"; Keri Russell, "The Americans"

Actor, TV Series-Drama:

Jason Bateman, "Ozark"; Stephen James, "Homeland"; Richard Madden, "Bodyguard"; Billy Porter, "Pose"; Matthew Rhys, "The Americans"

TV Series, Musical or Comedy:

"Barry," "The Good Place," "Kidding," "The Kominsky Method," "The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel"

Actress, TV Series, Musical or Comedy:

Kristen Bell, "The Good Place"; Candice Bergen, "Murphy Brown"; Alison Brie, "GLOW"; Rachel Brosnahan, "The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel"; Debra Messing, "Will & Grace"

Actor, TV Series, Musical or Comedy:

Sacha Baron Cohen, "Who Is America?"; Jim Carrey, "Kidding"; Michael Douglas, "The Kominsky Method"; Donald Glover, "Atlanta"; Bill Hader, "Barry"

TV Limited Series or Movie Made for Television:

"The Alienist," "The Assassination of Gianni Versace: American Crime Story," "Escape at Dannemora," "Sharp Objects," "A Very English Scandal"

Actress, Limited Series or Movie Made for Television:

Amy Adams, "Sharp Objects"; Patricia Arquette, "Escape at Dannemora"; Connie Britton, "Dirty John"; Laura Dem, "The Tale"; Regina King, "Seven Seconds"

Actor, Limited Series or Movie Made for Television:

Antonio Banderas, "Genius: Picasso"; Daniel Brühl, "The Alienist"; Darren Criss, "The Assassination of Gianni Versace: American Crime Story"; Benedict Cumberbatch, "Patrick Melrose"; Hugh Grant, "A Very English Scandal"

Actress, Supporting Role, Limited Series or Movie Made for Television:

Alex Borstein, "The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel"; Patricia Clarkson, "Sharp Objects"; Penelope Cruz, "The Assassination of Gianni Versace: American Crime Story"; Thandie Newton, "Westworld"; Yvonne Strahovski, "The Handmaid's Tale"

Actor, Supporting Role, Series, Limited Series or Movie Made for Television:

Alan Arkin, "The Kominsky Method"; Kieran Culkin, "Succession"; Edgar Ramirez, "The Assassination of Gianni Versace: American Crime Story"; Ben Whishaw, "A Very English Scandal"; Henry Winkler, "Barry"

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OPINION

Election losers' acts not just sour grapes

By ARI MELBER

Special to The Washington Post

Our nation is reeling from sustained, public attacks on the rule of law. Voters are openly encouraged to question the legitimacy of elections. And a prerequisite for any democracy — the peaceful transfer of power — is in doubt.

These problems are hitting a fever pitch in the United States, and not because of President Donald Trump. The culprits are Republican politicians in Wisconsin, where the GOP just lost races for governor and attorney general.

Republican lawmakers reacted to their defeat by pushing unusual laws to dilute the authority of the offices their party lost. The effort is brazen: Use the dwindling powers of a lame-duck legislative session to sabotage the people's taking over.

This is not normal. It is not part of a "cycle of partisan warfare." It is not "an other round" of payback that pundits can debate through the narrow lens of clever strategy. It is antithetical to democracy.

Worse, the maneuvers playing out in Wisconsin are more consequential than a single state's local politics. We are witnessing a blatant ploy to undercut a core premise of our constitutional democracy — that the people (and party) leaving office have an obligation to transfer their powers peacefully and professionally. Period.

Wisconsin Republicans are not staging a physical coup. But there is more than one way to steal power. They are exploiting the democratic legislative process to attack democracy itself.

Some defenders argue that the legislature has the technical power to reform

the offices in question, and to limit their future actions. That may be technically accurate, but it misses the point. Of course a legislature has powers to decide how the government operates. The issue is whether explicitly legislating to undermine election results is an abuse of those powers.

The playbook in Wisconsin echoes the North Carolina GOP when called a "special session" after losing the 2016 governor's race for the purpose of sabotaging the incoming Democratic governor. Republicans eliminated 75 percent of the posts the governor could appoint, added a partisan category to judicial races and limited voting access, among other things.

Are these plays even legal?

It depends. Courts do defer to many decisions reached by state legislatures. Courts also have a rule against taking cases that would turn them into a forum to "break ties" on controversies that are essentially political in nature. And when some of the "Political Questions Doctrine" is called.

On the other hand, there are also clear precedents that courts do have an obligation to intervene when one branch is abusing its power to thwart the functioning of democracy itself. That precedent enabled courts to keep a political office from the way out, Republicans in Wisconsin and North Carolina also deployed gerrymandering to lure and undercut the outcomes of their elections.

More Wisconsin voters backed Demo-

crats in their state Assembly races last month, but Republicans were still able to "win" control of 64 percent of the district seats. North Carolina's congressional gerrymandering was so extreme, meanwhile, its 2011 maps were thrown out by the courts as unconstitutional discrimination.

So the courts are a partial backstop. It would be a mistake, however, to count solely on the courts, waiting to see which moves are so extreme that judges declare them illegal. That posture only rewards the more shameless politicians.

As a practical matter, not every democratic norm is accompanied by a legal chaperone. Some of our most vital ideas about modern democracy are not even in the Constitution, like the now-widely accepted belief that each citizen deserves a vote, or that you win an election by winning more votes. (The second idea has come to define majority rule, but is not a requirement in the Electoral College.)

Today's schemes to dilute an office before handing it to a new party or to deploy computer modeling to make voting districts as undemocratic as possible may use tricks that the Founders did not specifically anticipate. They are animated by a temptation, however, that the Constitution does try to combat — the tendency of politicians to put their own power above the public interest, and for factions to treat government as a tool of aggrandizement.

To protect democracy over the long term, that kind of approach must not only lose in the courts and in public opinion. It must be punished by judges and voters so aggressively that it is no longer considered a legitimate option in the first place.

Ari Melber is MSNBC's chief legal correspondent.

Work across the aisle, address these vital issues

By JASON GRUMET

CQ-Roll Call

Over the past several election cycles, political parties, pundits and activists have proclaimed governing "mandates" based on the support of only a slim majority of voters who represent just a small fraction of the actual population. The mandate hyperbole has fueled careening and brittle policy agendas that have undermined economic progress and national cohesion.

In the recent midterms, our divided country has felt severely deprived both parties of the fantasy that they can govern without compromise. The question now is whether congressional leaders can develop a pragmatic agenda to lead a divided nation.

The Bipartisan Policy Center is under no illusion that the Democratic House and Republican-run Senate will abandon base politics and chalk up huge victories on immigration, health care or climate change. However, there is a politically viable policy agenda that can improve the lives of millions of Americans and begin to rebuild Congress' ability to confront the dire challenges that remain.

The path forward must not be informed by nostalgia for gentler times but guided by current incentives and recent history. The current Congress, unruly as it was, passed several meaningful bills with bipartisan support, including legislation to fight opioid abuse, to revive the Dodd-Frank Act to make it easier for small businesses to get loans, and to improve care for Medicare patients with chronic conditions.

While every issue is different, those efforts share characteristics that we believe represent the sweet spot for legislative success. First, they are "kitchen-table" is-

sues to which most Americans can relate. Second, the topics are more comprehensible than comprehensive, focusing on key aspects of larger problems. Third, constructive partisans with credibility in their respective caucuses led the legislative efforts. Finally, each success came through a committee-led process as opposed to being forced forward by leadership without meaningful deliberation.

The Bipartisan Policy Center is working with legislative leadership initiatives that meet these criteria. These issues include:

1) **Improving infrastructure.** We are recommending ways to augment government infrastructure funding with private capital to help close our nation's \$2 trillion funding gap for roads, water systems, mass transit, rural broadband and other needs. While privatization of traditionally public works is not without controversy, many nations have figured out how to combine public and private funding that effectively and equitably shares the risks, responsibilities and benefits of modernization.

2) **Strengthening accountability in higher education.** The federal government allocates more than \$100 billion a year in grants and loans to post-secondary students. Yet oversight is lax, and institutions with poor academic records and high default rates continue to receive funds. That leaves too many students burdened with high debt and low career prospects.

There is bipartisan congressional interest in better incentives and greater accountability, and the pending reauthorization of the Higher Education Act provides the vehicle for action. Tennessee Republican Lamar Alexander and Washington Democrat Patty Murray are poised to lead the effort in the Senate. They both enjoy substantial influence in their parties and have a long history of principled collaboration.

Their shared commitment to a deliberative committee process greatly increases the chances of effective legislation.

3) **Providing paid family leave.** Public support for paid family leave cuts across all parties, regions and demographics. In solid-red Louisiana, a recent poll showed that 77 percent of Republican voters supported a federal paid family leave policy. The substantive debate has matured in recent years as six states and the District of Columbia have enacted paid family leave laws, and at least half of all states are considering some paid family and medical leave legislation.

Most significantly, the Trump administration and leading members of both parties agree that enabling parents to spend time with their new children without losing their income is an idea that aligns with their substantive and political interests.

We know congressional action is often driven by headlines, such as the debt ceiling, or by unforeseen events, such as hurricanes or wildfires. And fiscal imperatives are expected to dominate the calendar next Congress. We limited opportunities for proactive policy achievements, it is crucial for lawmakers to establish a meaningful and realistic policy agenda early in the next Congress and deliver tangible benefits to the American people.

Progress will not come easily. Voters have been against the constitution, electing a Congress that is more partisan than the last while expressing a desire for members to work together and get things done. It is now up to leadership to set aside the false narratives of mandates and promote issues like those outlined above that represent the shared interests of a divided country.

Jason Grumet is the founder and president of the Bipartisan Policy Center.

OPINION

What newspapers are saying at home

The following editorial excerpts are selected from a cross section of newspapers throughout the United States. The editors are provided by The Associated Press and other statewide syndicates.

Bush never lost that drive to help his Lone Star neighbors

Houston Chronicle

In June 1948, after the College World Series and graduation day at Yale, young George H.W. Bush packed up his cranberry-red Studebaker (a graduation gift from his father) and headed the car's distinctive nose in a southwesterly direction. The little car got him to Odessa and to a shotgun duplex, where two prostitutes lived on the other side of the wall. "Kind of humble," Bush called it. While the young war hero from Connecticut scrambled to gain a foothold in the West Texas oil patch, the rented dwelling would be home for himself and his wife, Barbara, and their little boy, George.

The young New Englander had just come to a strange new world. "First, it was flat, perfectly flat, like no land they had ever seen," Richard Ben Cramer wrote in his classic "What It Takes: The Way to the White House." "No brooks, streams, rivers. No native trees — no trees. It was bright, and hot like a desert, and never felt heavy, and gritty everywhere with dust."

That Studebaker (a restored version is on permanent display at the Bush Library in College Station) was the Bushes' chariot to a new life. It carried them to an adventure, an opportunity to create lives for themselves away from the received norms, hoary traditions and family expectations.

Texas — first Odessa-Midland, and then Houston — offered a young family that opportunity. It was in the tradition of an opportunity held out slightly more than a century earlier to Stephen F. Austin's Old Three Hundred and to newcomers eager to establish a new life in a new settlement beside a mosquito-ridden bayou. It was the same sort of opportunity that lured to the Lone Star State countless young war veterans eager to begin building homes, families and careers. The place was open, unformed and rich with promise.

"When I wanted to learn the ways of the world, I didn't go to the Kennedy School," Bush told delegates to the 1988 Texas state GOP convention. "I came to Texas, in 1948."

Flash forward nearly 45 years beyond the Bushes' West Texas adventure. "They will come back to Houston," people were saying as George and Barbara Bush prepared to vacate the White House after years of living in Washington. "They'll go back East."

But they didn't go back East. Houston was home. They not only came home, but they made themselves an integral part of this community. They continued to exemplify as they had their whole lives. The Houston Literacy Foundation bears Barbara's name. George was an invaluable resource for a city expanding its economic horizon toward China. And they were a common sight behind home plate at Astros games.

As lawyers and business leaders, exemplars for their fellow Houstonians and their fellow Texans, George and Barbara Bush still serve.

The nation will discuss and debate the Bush presidency. Books will explore its achievements and its failures. That's not only right and good, but it's useful to a nation that presumes to govern itself.

Just as useful are Bush memorials in our midst. A great international airport, a statue near the Arts District, a dynamic literacy program — perhaps a little red Studebaker, circa 1947 — are reminders that we have had opportunity to serve, wherever we happen to be, whatever our



status in life. Our fellow Texan, the good and decent man we lost a week ago, has shown us the way.

Flynn helped himself, which likely hurt Trump's status

The New York Times

It is almost a truism in criminal investigations that those who flip early and help prosecutors build their case against higher-ranking figures are shown greater leniency than those who try to gut it out.

Michael Flynn, who served briefly as President Donald Trump's national security adviser, is Exhibit A in the special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election.

If other players, such as Paul Manafort and George Papadopoulos, have worked only grudgingly with the special counsel, and some, like Roger Stone, are still holding out, we now know, thanks to a sentencing recommendation that the office filed late Tuesday in federal court, that Flynn provided "substantial assistance" to federal investigators working to unravel the Russia mystery.

Flynn pleaded guilty to a single count of lying to the FBI last December and has been cooperating with investigators ever since. Perhaps he is motivated by a hope for leniency, perhaps by fidelity to the institutions he spent much of his lifetime serving. One day we may know.

Flynn's assistance must give pause to the president, who has complained that "flipping" to testify against others should be illegal and has denigrated the work of law enforcement agencies. Just this week Trump praised Stone for having the "guts" not to cooperate with the Mueller investigation. The president has said little about Flynn since he left his employ.

The words "substantial assistance" are a legal term of art and carry significant weight in sentencing decisions. Flynn, who resigned as national security adviser in February 2017 after serving 24 days in the job, sat for 19 interviews with Mueller's prosecutors, assisting in several investigations, including the special counsel's inquiry. (The details of those investigations are not provided in the sentencing memorandum.) For Flynn, this means that it is now appropriate to warrant, "in the special counsel's view, that he receive a light sentence — perhaps no jail time at all."

Since Mueller began obtaining indictments and convictions for a constellation of figures associated with Trump's campaign — as well as Russia's efforts to interfere in the election — this is the first time the special counsel's office has offered glowing praise for one of its targets and credited the value of cooperating early and often.

Flynn should take comfort in that, but that's not to say his misdeeds were minor. As lawyers for Mueller's office noted in their sentencing submission, Flynn's

crime was "serious." On several occasions during a fateful interview at the White House just days into the new administration, the former national security adviser lied to FBI agents about his contacts during the transition with the former Russian ambassador. Flynn and the ambassador, Sergey Kislyak, discussed ways to undercut Obama administration policy in the Middle East and toward Russia. We do not yet know whether Flynn, a former Army lieutenant general and director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, did this on his own initiative or on orders from Trump or someone close to him.

After that fiasco, Flynn found himself in further legal jeopardy when he hid from the Justice Department the true extent of his lobbying work for Turkey, for which he acted as a foreign agent during the campaign. That Mueller didn't charge Flynn for this violation of the Foreign Agents Registration Act was part of the sentencing deal — and a reason Flynn may have felt compelled to tell the special counsel everything he knows.

And what he knows, apparently, is quite a lot, as Mueller's filing to the judge who will be sentencing Flynn indicates, with heavy redactions detailing nonpublic aspects of the Russia investigation plus a continuing criminal probe that seems unrelated to the larger inquiry. We won't know until we know, but it is undeniable that Flynn was useful to the special counsel.

And lest we forget: Flynn himself is the reason there is a special counsel. Had it not been for Trump's desire to interfere with the FBI's pursuit of the man who led chants of "lock her up" at the Republican National Convention — and the subsequent firing of James Comey over his refusal to let go of the broader counterintelligence investigation — Mueller would not have been appointed. Flynn always played a central role in this sprawling saga, and his own Russia connections never ceased to be problematic. His coming sentencing after a year of valuable cooperation with prosecutors brings us a step closer to learning why Trump was so invested in him.

Macron's rash gas tax sparked a fire in France's rural reaches

The Wall Street Journal

"There is no Plan B because there is no Planet B," Emmanuel Macron lectured Donald Trump — in English — when the American president withdrew from the Paris climate agreement last year. Well, apparently there is a Plan B after all. Macron stopped his fuel-tax increase after concluding that marginal carbon reductions aren't worth kneecapping an economy and sacrificing his political career. Trump could have warned him.

The French president views stopping climate change as a grand legacy project, and he had hoped to use higher fuel taxes to discourage driving for the sake of slashing

carbon emissions. It didn't matter to him that French emissions already are very low on a per capita basis and further cuts to transport emissions would be extremely difficult to achieve. But this matters a great deal to lower-income rural voters whose use of cars for daily life and business was about to become much more expensive.

Those voters pushed back the yellow vest movement — named for the safety gear they wear — that in turn has created a political crisis for Macron. What began as a few hundred thousand protesters scattered around the country became more than a million last weekend, including inexcusable rioting mobs in Paris.

Macron's tax backslash, which his government says is only for six months, might induce the protesters to return home. But the movement grew so large and garnered so much public sympathy that his entire economic reform agenda is now in jeopardy. The fuel tax was not part of his election campaign.

Trump tried to warn the French leader, albeit indirectly. "No responsible leader can put the workers — and the people — of their country at this debilitating and tremendous disadvantage," he said of the costs of the Paris climate deal when he announced the American withdrawal. The point is that the public seems to understand better than progressive elites that the consequences of climate change, whatever they turn out to be, will be easier to confront the more prosperous the world is.

Congress should lead frank discussion on Yemen policy

The Orange County (Calif.) Register

For too long, Congress has abdicated its constitutional obligations with respect to war powers.

On Nov. 28, the Senate took an important step toward reasserting this authority by voting 63 to 37 in favor of moving ahead on a resolution directing the removal of U.S. armed forces from hostilities in Yemen that have not been authorized by Congress. The resolution, introduced by Sens. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt.; Mike Lee, R-Utah; and Mark Warner, D-Va., indicates that an overdue willingness on the part of senators across the political spectrum to finally debate American involvement in a conflict that the U.S. has long been involved in.

Under the presidencies of Barack Obama and Donald Trump, the U.S. has aided a coalition of nations led by Saudi Arabia as they've intervened in a brutal civil war that has ravaged Yemen.

Since 2015, the U.S. has provided logistical and intelligence support, including mid-air refueling of coalition jets. That has continued despite numerous reports that U.S. military jets, including one on Oct. 8, 2016, bombing of a funeral in Sana'a that killed up to 155 people. More recently, an American-made bomb was used by the Saudi-led coalition in the bombing of a school bus on Aug. 9 that killed 40 children. All of this has gone on without so much as a vote from Congress as to whether the U.S. actually needs to be involved in the conflict.

In March, the Senate actually voted 55 to 44 to table the resolution it voted to advance last week. To their credit, California's senators, Kamala Harris and Dianne Feinstein, both Democrats, voted against tabling the resolution. Harris recently voted to advance the resolution.

For their part, the White House has opposed efforts to scale back unchecked war-making. On Nov. 28, the Trump administration issued a statement threatening to veto S.J. Res. 54, arguing "the joint resolution would negatively impact the ability of the United States to prevent the spread of violent extremist organizations" like al-Qaida.

No one should fall for such a hollow excuse. If America is going to be involved in a conflict, the case should be made, debated and voted up or down in Congress. That's what the Constitution demands.

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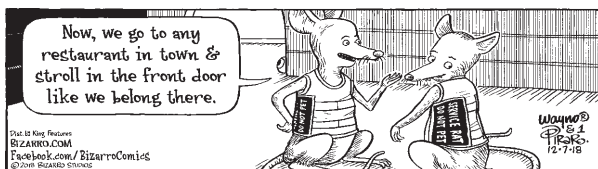
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48 Commotion	22 Italian port
49 Burpee buy	23 "The Good
50 The Red Planet	Earth" wife
51 Bottom line	25 Pump into
	26 Certain hotel
DOWN	plan
1 More (Sp.)	27 Sharif of film
2 Illustrations	28 Apprehends
3 Witch's pot	30 Dr. McGraw
4 Finger or toe	33 Swapped
5 "So be it"	34 "Neato!"
6 Eastern path	36 Shapeless forms
7 Raggedy doll	37 Has bills
8 Chum	38 Protuberance
9 Grassy area	39 Canal of song
10 "Zounds!"	40 Mast
11 Relaxed	42 "Platoon" locale
12 Reddish horse	43 "Eureka!"
19 Sweater material	44 Poem of praise
20 Halt	45 "Kiddin!"

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Today's Cryptoquip Clue: J equals F

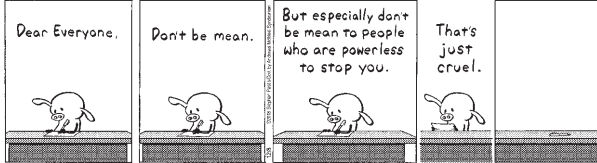
Frazz



Dilbert



Pearls Before Swine



Non Sequitur



Candorville



Carpe Diem



Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

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ACROSS

- Mr. Disney
- Dickens girl
- Trendy
- Latin love
- "Garfield" dog
- A ostrich's kin
- Activist Parks
- Midwestern strip
- Campaigned
- Platter
- "Today" rival, briefly
- Hot
- Japanese pond fish
- Kanga's kid
- 25 Include for free
- 26 Celtic priests
- 32 Make invalid
- 33 Foolish
- 34 Conviction
- 36 Dennis of NBA fame
- 37 Capote nickname
- 38 Tolkien creature
- 39 Striped fish
- 42 Wee bit
- 44 Filches
- 48 Flamenco cheer
- 49 Pay for
- 50 Military no-show
- 51 Morning moisture
- 52 Sea eagle
- 53 Yield
- 54 Longing
- 55 Put on
- 56 Recognized
- 25 Bar bill
- 26 Count start
- 27 NBC weekend show
- 1 City district
- 2 Mine, in Montreal
- 3 Privation
- 4 Garments for dashing people?
- 5 Head, stangly
- 6 Dutch cheese
- 7 Igwana, for one
- 8 Meadow
- 9 Roll call reply
- 10 Big-screen format
- 11 Weak
- 20 Audio portion of a film
- 22 Edmonton player
- 24 Hunter in the sky
- 29 Cartesian conclusion
- 30 Genetic stuff
- 31 Capitol VIP
- 35 Time to come
- 36 More embarrassed, say
- 39 Physique
- 40 Sheltered at sea
- 41 Stitched
- 43 "The King and I" role
- 45 Actor Clive
- 46 Foreshadow
- 47 Dispatched
- 49 Hardly any

Answer to Previous Puzzle

M	A	C	D	A	T	A	F	L	E	E
A	R	A	I	M	A	N	R	A	G	A
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12-8

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NHL/HIGH SCHOOL: DODEA PACIFIC

Around the league

Hughes expected to go No. 1

By LARRY LAGE

Associated Press

PLYMOUTH, Mich. — Jack Hughes draws a crowd.

Detroit general manager Ken Holland and former Red Wing star Steve Yzerman chatted during the first intermission of one of Hughes' recent games. Scouts from the NHL were scattered throughout USA Hockey Arena that night, taking notes for teams paying them to evaluate the world's best hockey players.

Hughes, a 17-year-old center, will likely be a top pick in the NHL Draft in June.

USA Hockey has developed the nation's top players for more than two-plus decades and four of them have been selected No. 1 overall — including Auston Matthews and Patrick Kane — from its National Team Development Program. Hughes is expected to be next.

"He's as good as I've seen come through here in terms of talent, work ethic and being the complete package on and off the ice," said senior director of operations Scott Monaghan, who has been with the program since its inception in 1993. "He's more like Patrick because of his skating and shiftness than Auston, who was really big and strong."

Hughes chose to surround himself with the best American hockey players his age as an amateur instead of getting paid as the No. 1 pick in the Ontario Hockey League. He also could have graduated high school a year early to play with his brother, Quinn, a freshman at Michigan and a defenseman drafted No. 7 overall last summer by the Vancouver Canucks.

"I feel like it's the best place to be for a 16-year, 17-year-old," Hughes told "The Associated Press." "No one trains as hard as we. We skate every day. We lift three days a week. We play a great schedule. I think it's the best place to be to groom yourself to be an NHL player someday."

Hughes starts his day at 6:15 a.m. with two eggs on a bagel with cream cheese and salmon along with some fresh fruit, orange juice and a vitamin. He has to arrive at school shortly after 7 a.m. and if he's tardy or misses a class, USA Hockey has a staff member who knows it and there are consequences.

"There's no sleeping in," Jack Hughes said. "They'll tell you for a period if you're late or skip a class, or if you're late for the bus."

Hughes, who plans to graduate this month, takes four classes before heading to USA Hockey Arena in suburban Detroit to drill on a shooting pad, lift weights and go through an intense, two-hour practice before going to study table. His favorite meal is his fa-

NHL score board

Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division									
GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	SV%	PP	PKA
Tampa Bay	29	21	7	0	43	114	85		
Toronto	28	20	8	0	40	102	73		
Boston	28	19	9	0	39	99	82		
Boston	27	14	9	4	32	71	89		
Montreal	28	12	10	5	31	88	90		
Detroit	28	12	12	4	29	81	93		
Florida	26	11	10	5	27	87	91		
Ottawa	28	12	13	3	27	94	114		

Metropolitan Division									
GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	SV%	PP	PKA
Washington	27	15	10	2	33	98	88		
Columbus	27	15	10	2	32	92	72		
N.Y. Islanders	26	13	10	3	29	77	75		
N.Y. Rangers	28	11	12	5	28	89	88		
Carolina	27	12	11	4	28	76	77		
Pittsburgh	28	11	12	5	27	89	97		
Philadelphia	25	11	12	2	24	76	88		
New Jersey	26	9	12	5	23	75	91		

Western Conference

Central Division									
GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	SV%	PP	PKA
Nashville	29	19	8	0	39	90	67		
Colorado	28	16	7	5	37	102	79		
St. Louis	27	17	7	3	34	78	78		
Dallas	28	15	10	3	33	78	72		
Minnesota	28	15	10	2	32	86	105		
Chicago	29	9	15	5	23	79	108		
St. Louis	28	13	2	22	76	78			

Pacific Division									
GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	SV%	PP	PKA
Calgary	28	17	9	2	36	100	92		
Anheim	28	17	9	2	36	100	92		
San Jose	29	14	10	5	33	90	80		
Vancouver	28	14	10	4	32	94	78		
Edmonton	28	15	12	2	30	74	85		
Arizona	26	13	11	2	28	68	75		
Vancouver	30	11	16	3	25	69	87		
Los Angeles	28	10	17	1	21	59	84		

Notes: Two-pointers are in red, one point for overtime loss. Top three teams in each division and two wild cards per conference advance to playoffs.

Wednesday's games
Edmonton @ St. Louis, 5:30
Anaheim @ Chicago, 2
San Jose @ Carolina

Thursday's games
Detroit @ Toronto
N.Y. Islanders @ Pittsburgh
Boston @ Philadelphia

Friday's games
Boston @ Tampa Bay
Boston @ Arizona
Minnesota @ Calgary

Saturday's games
St. Louis @ Los Angeles
Calgary @ Vegas
New Jersey @ Dallas

Sunday's games
St. Louis @ Winnipeg
San Jose @ Dallas
Minnesota @ Edmonton

Monday's games
Vegas @ Los Angeles
N.Y. Islanders @ Detroit
Detroit @ Tampa Bay

Tuesday's games
Pittsburgh @ Ottawa
N.Y. Rangers @ Florida
Washington @ Columbus

Wednesday's games
Toronto @ Boston
San Jose @ Arizona
Nashville @ Atlanta

Thursday's games
Vancouver @ St. Louis
Philadelphia @ Winnipeg
Boston @ Ottawa

Friday's games
Montreal @ Chicago
New Jersey @ Anaheim
Calgary @ Edmonton

Saturday's games
Dallas @ Vegas

Sunday's games
Vancouver @ St. Louis
Philadelphia @ Winnipeg
Boston @ Ottawa

Monday's games
Montreal @ Chicago
New Jersey @ Anaheim
Calgary @ Edmonton

Tuesday's games
Dallas @ Vegas

Wednesday's games
Detroit @ Toronto
N.Y. Islanders @ Pittsburgh
Boston @ Philadelphia

Thursday's games
Boston @ Tampa Bay
Boston @ Arizona
Minnesota @ Calgary

Friday's games
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Calgary @ Vegas
New Jersey @ Dallas

Saturday's games
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San Jose @ Dallas
Minnesota @ Edmonton

Sunday's games
St. Louis @ Winnipeg
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Monday's games
Vegas @ Los Angeles
N.Y. Islanders @ Detroit
Detroit @ Tampa Bay

Tuesday's games
Pittsburgh @ Ottawa
N.Y. Rangers @ Florida
Washington @ Columbus

Wednesday's games
Toronto @ Boston
San Jose @ Arizona
Nashville @ Atlanta

Can't Mary's or Kinnick?

By DAVE ORNAUER

Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — After five seasons of dominating Far East Division I wrestling, St. Mary's and Kinnick are pretty much starting over, particularly the Red Devils.

Reigning Kanto Plain, DODEA Japan and Far East D-I champion Kinnick lost 12 of 13 starters, has only one returning champion in senior Chris Mason and will bring to the mat a young lineup looking to develop.

The Titans are in better shape, sporting a lineup top-heavy in underclassmen but also six seniors, three of whom played last year's Far East. They return only one defending champion in sophomore Eiji Kasahara.

"It's really wide open," ninth-year Kinnick coach Gary Wilson said of the upcoming season and who might be in line for a shot at Division I honors. "It's pretty cyclical here. You have some down years when you have to build again. We have a lot of work to do. We're all rookies."

So who might be in line to bypass St. Mary's and Kinnick, with 28 Far East wrestling titles between them, and seize the Division I crown?

"I liked Kubasaki last year, and American School In Japan, too," Wilson said of the Dragons, who have 25 Far East titles, a Pacific record in any sport; and the Mustangs, with four Far East mat titles. "They have some things going on."

The Dragons return five wrestlers, three of whom placed at Far East a year ago. Coach Brent Cook, in his third season, says his team is deep at all weight classes, including one, 215, where he's torn regarding who he'll keep as his No. 1, Clint Reveling-wood or Haydn Peterson.

"They're focused, concentrating, hard-working; they're pretty impressive," Cook said of his group

of wrestlers, which as of Tuesday numbered 30. "I see a different team than I've seen the last couple of years."

Senior Luke Moseley placed third at 148 last year and sophomore Jaylan Mayers fifth at 122. Peterson finished fourth at 215 a year ago, but is getting a strong challenge from Reventon.

Thanks to a spike in enrollment due to the transformation from Yongsan Garrison south, Humphreys moves from Division II to Division I, and has a new coach in coach Ben Pak, who was at Division II Seoul American the past six seasons.

But Pak and the Blackhaws face the same issue he and Seoul American faced when they were at the top of the Korea heap. Humphreys can fill just about every weight class, but the same cannot be said for the Falcons, Osan and Daegu, where the ranks are thin. Osan does sport two-time champion Kojiro VanHoose at 122.

"I'll have several wrestlers who will go through the season with no matches and when they get to Far East, they will struggle due to limited competition as well as experience," Pak said.

"With Humphreys' student population getting larger, we're going to be at a disadvantage compared to schools in Japan and Okinawa."

In Japan Division II, the numbers are down at Zama and Edgren, and E.J. King will not field a team.

The two most populous D-II teams in Japan are runner-up Far East champion Yokota and last year's defending Perry. Each has a reigning Far East champion on its roster — Caleb Heino for the Panthers, and Marshall China for the Samurai — and can fill almost all weights.

"If you're not contending, you're pretending," Samurai third-year coach Chris Munsell said. "We will always contend as long as I'm coaching here."

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Team capsules

Division I
Humphreys Blackhaws
2018 Far East finish — Wrestled Division II last season; third in individual freestyle, fourth in dual meet.

Head coach — Ben Pak, first season (coached previous six seasons at Seoul American).

Key performers — Ben Lister Jr., 115 (fourth at 122 at Far East); Sam Lister Jr., 122 (fourth at 115 at Far East); Perry, heavyweight (fifth at Far East, transferred from Seoul American).

Outlook — Continuing to build. Humphreys has had coach in six seasons. And the Blackhaws will have few matches to prepare for Far East.

Kadena Panthers
2018 Far East finish — Fifth in individual freestyle, dual meet.

Head coach — David Compton, first season.

Key performers — Axel Shepperd, 50, 122; Ben Tobler, 158; John, 141; Kelsey Johnson, 50, 148; Rock, 158; Tobler, 50, 158; Tomas Cully, 50, 168.

Outlook — Rebuilding. Third new head coach in three seasons, assisted by a handful of all-service wrestlers. Still, this is a challenge, with no placing wires returning last season.

2018 Far East finish — Third in individual freestyle, dual meet.

Head coach — Brian Cook, third season.

Key performers — Noah Vasquez, 58, 108; Jaylan Mayers, 50, 122 (fifth at Far East); Kinnick, 148 (third at Far East); Haydn Peterson, 50, 215 (fourth at Far East); Kinnick, 525.

Outlook — Rebuilding/contending. This may be Kubasaki's best chance to turn to the top of the awards podium after a year of rebuilding. Dragons have dominated. Dragons have the talent.

Kinnick Red Devils
2018 Far East finish — Defending individual freestyle, dual meet champion.

Head coach — Gary Wilson, ninth season.

Key performers — Liam Jones, Jr., 115;

Ethan Hamilton, Jr., 141; Caleb Leon Guerrier, 148; Marc Morgan, Sr., 158; Luan Macato, Sr., 168; Chris Mason, Jr., 215 (reigning Far East champion); Guillermo Reyes, Jr., heavyweight.

Outlook — Rebuilding, for the first time in 13 years. In 12 of 13 varsity wrestlers from last season gone. Mason is the lone holdover.

Division II
Daegu Warriors
2018 Far East finish — Seventh in individual freestyle.

Head coach — Jeramie Lenth, sixth season.

Key performers — Jacob Berry, Jr., 141; Gavin Jackson, 50, 158.

Outlook — Rebuilding. Just two returning wrestlers from last year, a handful of new ones, but not nearly enough to compete for team placement. Warriors plan to focus on individual matches and week-to-week improvement.

Edgren Eagles
2018 Far East finish — Fourth in individual freestyle, third in dual meet.

Head coach — Justin Edmonds, 14th season.

Key performers — None provided.

Outlook — Rebuilding. Edmonds continues to reconstruct a team he coached to nine Far East Division II team titles and eight individual champions.

Osan Cougars
2018 Far East finish — Second in individual freestyle.

Head coach — Andrew Grant, first season.

Key performers — Kojiro VanHoose, Jr., 122 (reigning 108-pound Far East champion); Kojiro VanHoose, Jr., 141; Kojiro VanHoose, Jr., 148 (141-pound runner-up); Braydon Hammond, Sr., 168-180.

Outlook — Rebuilding/reloading. Numbers are thin at this point, but Paul does have the VanHooses brothers to fall back on; each is expected to contend at his respective weight. Just a question of whether more folks come up to the mat.

2018 Far East finish — Second in individual freestyle, dual meet.

Head coach — Chris Munsell, third season.

Key performers — Marshall China, Jr., heavyweight (reigning Far East champion); Marcus Irons, 50, 115 (fifth at 101

at Far East); Kristian Irons, Jr., 148; Brad Pong, 122; Hunter Sals, 50, 168; Zach Forester, 50, 180; James Williams, Jr., 180; Robert Rogers, 50, 185; Cameron Penn, Jr., 141; Nemo Mathews, Jr., 180; Derek Jakobs, Jr., 215.

Outlook — Rebuilding/contending. The Samurai leded from ninth to second place in the 115-pound meet.

Seoul American Falcons
2018 Far East finish — Wrestled at Division I last season. Sixth in individual freestyle, dual meet.

Head coach — Brittney Waldner, first season.

Key performers — Brian Cho, Jr., 180 (sixth at Far East); Eriane Velazquez-Lebron, 50, 140 or 148.

Outlook — Rebuilding in the Falcons' lineup. Seol lost its head coach, and some assistant coaches graduated or transferred, but O'Grady feels confident that the retooled lineup will continue to produce results.

Yokota Panthers
2018 Far East finish — Defending Division I individual freestyle, dual meet champion.

Head coach — Kristina O'Grady, second season.

Key performers — Caleb Heino, Jr., 108 (reigning 101-pound Far East champion); Chris DeGrella, 50, 122; Kaden Meyer, Jr., 125; Ramon Colonos, 50, 135; Joey Sedel, Jr., 141; Cameron Owens, Jr., 168 (third at Far East); Austin Fisher, Jr., 180.

Outlook — Rebuilding/reloading. Many coaches graduated or transferred, but O'Grady feels confident that the retooled lineup will continue to produce results.

2018 Far East finish — Ninth in individual freestyle, fifth in dual meet.

Head coach — Gary Bowdler, second season.

Key performers — Eligh Caba, 50, 141; Ben Finkel, 50, 135; Desmond Martin, Jr., heavyweight (transferred from Kinnick); Cain Mumford, Sr.; Nicholas Amanatidis.

Outlook — Rebuilding. Fourth coach in a row. Young, won't fill every weight, but young; won't fill every weight, but will grow and develop over time.

HIGH SCHOOL: DODEA PACIFIC

Boys basketball preview

Two champs vying for D-II

Former D-II champ Humphreys, others aim to take Kinnick's crown

By DAVE ORNAUER
Stars and Stripes

Nile C. Kinnick won a Far East boys basketball title last year. So did Humphreys. This year, at least one of those teams won't. At least not all by themselves.

Kinnick won the Far East Division I tournament and Humphreys took the D-II crown. But Humphreys moved up a division to start the school year.

Fueling the Red Devils' and Blackhawks' drives toward a possible D-I final showdown in February at Humphreys are several players who play year-round, and the coaches of their respective teams say they could be true difference-makers this season.

"It's like we're getting seasoned veteran players who know what to do," Blackhawks coach Ron Merriwether says of All-Far East senior returners Jalen Hill and two-time Far East MVP Quintin Metcalf.

At Kinnick, coach Robert Stovall said junior rising star Kaine Roberts has "really stepped up as a leader this year" for the Red Devils.

Metcalf and Hill spent last summer playing in Philadelphia for the Alexander Basketball Academy Global Squad, along with Kinnick's Davion Roberts and Chris Watson, and American School In Japan's Koki Wiley.

"They kind of understand that it's more than scoring points," Merriwether said. "Trying to benefit the team. Makes us as a whole lot harder to beat. Make the extra pass, get your teammates involved, elevate the level of play of everybody else."

For the last two summers, Kaine Roberts (no relation to Davion) has played for Yokohama B Corsairs U-15 to U-18 team in the Tokyo-Yokohama based Reccoss International League for teens.



PHOTOS BY JULIANNA VISCO/Special to Stars and Stripes

Quintin Metcalf, left, continues to tower over opponents in Korea. The 6-foot-9 Humphreys Blackhawks senior is a two-time reigning Far East tournament MVP — in 2017 with Division I champion Seoul American and last year with Division II champion Humphreys. He'll play alongside Jalen Hill, right, an All-Far East senior. This season, Humphreys elevates to Division I thanks to a spike in enrollment.

While all are aiming to play at a higher level next year, it's what they can do to bring their teams success this year that is in focus now.

"He's a team guy and that's where he's matured the most," Stovall said of Roberts. "He can create points for other guys, which is what we hoped he could do."

With Roberts and Watson in the lineup, Kinnick went 25-4 a year

ago, capturing the first Far East D-II title in school history.

Behind Metcalf and Hill, the Blackhawks made it a clean sweep of the Korea Blue titles, then went on to beat Yokota in the D-II final before taking third place in the combined Far East. They went 20-1, including a 5-1 ledger against Division I teams.

Even though it's not new for Humphreys to face D-I opponents, "we have to prepare for whomever we may see," Merriwether said. "We have to get better each week, have to improve on the little things."

With Humphreys now at D-I and two other recent D-II champions, E.J. King and Yokota, in rebuild mode, the chase for the small-schools title could be a wide-open one.

Among the more promising teams is Osan, which keeps three starters, welcomes two talented newcomers and is hoping to improve in both Korea Blue and Far East finishes.

Matthew C. Perry welcomes a brother tandem from California, Justin and Joseph Andres, along with experienced Kadena transfer Anthony Laney.

And while Robert D. Edgren appears young, the Eagles welcome four players with stateside experience, as well as new-old coach Andre Thibert, who returns to the bench after a five-season hiatus.

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Boys basketball team capsules

Division I
Humphreys Blackhawks
Head coach — Ron Merriwether, fourth season.

2017-18 season record — 20-1 overall; reigning Far East Division II champion, third in combined Far East tournament.

Key performers — Jalen Hill, Sr. post (All-Far East Division II); Quintin Metcalf, Sr. post (reigning Far East Division II Most Valuable Player; was D-I MVP in 2017); Connor Coyne, So. post; Kemari Pruitt, Fr. G.

Outlook — Contending. Five players return from last season's D-II champion team a year older, a year more mature and wise, Merriwether says. Deeper, versatile and taller than any Blackhawks team in the school's seven-year history.

Kadena Panthers
2017-18 season record — 27-11 overall; third place in Far East D-I in 2018, fourth place in combined Far East tournament.

Head coach — Antwon Tucker, first season (previously coached junior varsity).

Key performers — Eric McCarter, Jr. PG (All-Far East D-I); Jordan Valerio, Jr. PG; Roderick Rose, Sr. post; Blake Dearborn, Jr. post; Casey Cox, Jr. SG; Kai Harris, Jr. SF.

Outlook — Reloading. Another team not very long on height, but with plenty of athleticism and speed, McCarter might be the best player in the Pacific.

Kubasaki Dragons
2017-18 season record — 23-9 overall; fourth in Far East D-I in 2018.

Head coach — Jon Fick, 12th season.

Key performers — Jonathan Hoppe, Jr. post; Damian Dorval, Jr. post; Tristan Higginson, Jr. G; Dylan Canlas, Jr. G (missed last season with an ankle injury); Isaac Workman, So. F.

Outlook — Reloading/reloading. Some height, plenty of athleticism. Canlas will add plenty of quickness in the backcourt. Graduated Elonzo Higginson II will be missed, but the torch should be passed seamlessly to his younger brother.

Nile C. Kinnick Red Devils
2017-18 season record — 25-4 overall; defending Far East D-I champion, second in combined Far East tournament.

Head coach — Robert Stovall, eighth season.

Key performers — Davion Roberts, Sr. G (reigning Far East D-I MVP); Rashad Rapada, Sr. G; Chris Watson, So. G; Kaine Roberts, Jr. G; Rodrick Bell, Sr. post; Justice Jackson, Sr. post.

Outlook — Reloading/contending. Still plenty of height, speed and experience returning from last year's team and confidence level should be quite high, but a goodly amount of seniors departed.

2017-18 season record — 16-1 overall; tied for sixth in Korean-American Interscholastic Activities Conference Blue Division regular season.

Head coach — Blake Sims, third season.

Key performers — Elijah Bembschew, Sr. G; Ethan Rodriguez, Sr. swingman (All-Far East D-I); Jack Zimmer, So. swingman; Mikey Martinez, Sr. G; Kevin Park, So. G; J.B. Pope, Jr. G (transferred from States).

Outlook — Rebuilding. Pretty much an entirely new team, though it has some seniors, such as Bembschew, who has been Bembschew. Rodriguez is well rounded and can play multiple positions. Park and Pope should provide added depth.

E.J. King Cobras
2017-18 season record — 18-7 overall; third in Far East D-I.

Head coach — Thomas Elliott, first season (son of former Matthew C. Perry coach Bichard Elliott).

Key performers — Dyson Robinson, Sr. (All-Far East D-I); Jabari White, Sr. PF; Jalen Nall, Jr. G; James Meacham, So. G; L.J. Scarver, Jr. G; Christopher Fizer,

Fr. C.
Outlook — Reloading/contending. Led by Robinson, the Cobras bring back five experienced players from the team that won Far East D-I two years ago, bolstered by a handful of strong newcomers.

Robert D. Edgren Eagles
2017-18 season record — 22-22 overall; did not play at Far East D-I.

Head coach — Andre Thibert, ninth season (returns to the bench after a five-season layoff).

Key performers — Jun Royster, Sr. G; Chauncey Williams, Sr. G (transferred from Alabama); a year more mature and wise, Merriwether says. Deeper, versatile and taller than any Blackhawks team in the school's seven-year history.

Outlook — Rebuilding. A very young squad with just one experienced returner, but some seasoned stateside veterans who could make an impact.

Matthew C. Perry Samurai
2017-18 season record — 4-20 overall; did not play in Far East D-I.

Head coach — Daniel James, first season.

Key performers — Lorenzo Brown II, Sr. post; Jerrell Easdale, Sr. G; Deion Stephens, Sr. F; William Rudolph, Jr. G; Anthony Laney, Sr. G (transferred from Kadena); Jomari Silang, So. F (transferred from Zama); James Asuncion, Sr. G; Justin Andres, So. C; Justin Andres, Jr. C (transferred from El Dorado, Calif.); Avery James, Jr. F (transferred from Edgren).

Outlook — Contending. Fourth head coach in four seasons, Samura led a roster featuring six experienced players plus solid underclassmen. New players in particular should shine the brightest.

Osan Cougars
2017-18 season record — 10-13 overall; fifth in Far East D-I, sixth in combined Far East.

Head coach — Robert Perry, second season.

Key performers — Daniel Jameson, So. G; Joey Betts, Jr. G; Leo Legaspi, Sr. G; Jaden Wright, Sr. SF; Gavin Lund, Fr. G.

Outlook — Contending. Three starters back and two talented newcomers enter the picture, giving the Cougars a chance to improve both in league and Far East play.

Seoul American Falcons
2017-18 season record — 17-5 overall; reigning Far East D-I champion.

Head coach — Travis James, first season.

Key performer — Billy Laxton, Jr. F.

Outlook — Other than Laxton, the team is entirely new, including the coach, who's the first new one at the helm in 15 seasons. Just two upperclassmen. Working hard to be successful in this, the last season in school history.

Yokota Panthers
2017-18 season record — 19-10 overall; Far East D-I runner-up for second straight year.

Head coach — Dan Galvin, third season.

Key performers — Riley Demarco, Sr. SF; Ethan Gaurme, Sr. G; Ken Baarde, Sr. G; Taylor Jenkins, Sr. G; David Carlson, Sr. G.

Outlook — Rebuilding. Two starters graduated and two others transferred, taking a percent of the team's scoring and rebounding with them.

Zama Trojans
2017-18 season record — 14-18 overall; fourth in Kanto Plain.

Head coach — Arnel Calera, first season.

Key performers — De'Andre McNeal, Sr.; James Sturns, Sr.; Jeremiah Stewart, Sr.

Outlook — Rebuilding. Just newcomers and one returner (Stewart) on a squad half of which was made up of freshmen.



BEN SESSIONS/Special to Stars and Stripes

Senior Ethan Rodriguez is a returning All-Far East Division II player for the rebuilding Daegu boys basketball team.

Coach Robert Stovall says he has high hopes for Nile C. Kinnick junior guard Kaine Roberts, above, who is a year-round player with the Yokohama B Corsairs U-15 to U-18 team off base.

SHEILA SUCKART/Special to Stars and Stripes

HIGH SCHOOL: DODEA PACIFIC



SHELIA SUCKART/Special to Stripes

Seniors Cassi Boyer and Madelyn Gallo scrap for the ball during Kinnick girls basketball practice. Boyer is a returner; Gallo transferred from Rota, Spain.

Team capsules

Division I
Humphreys Blackhawks
2017-18 record — 3-18 overall; seventh in KAIAC Blue regular season.
Head coach — Steve Boyd, first season (coached Seoul American's boys for the past 15 seasons).

Key performers — Chahkira Goodwater, Sr.; SF; Naomi Harris, Sr.; PG; Krystal Duenas, Jr.; SG; Ebony Dykes, Sr.; PF (transferred from Seoul American); Accacia May, Jr.; SF; Melissa Pritchett, SG; Maria Bruch, Sr.; PG (transferred from Seoul American).
Outlook — Rebuilding-reloading. First season in Division I. Boyd will coach his first girls team in DODEA Pacific. By the time Far East comes along, Boyd hopes the Blackhawks can be competitive. Bruch, Dykes and Goodwater all have prior experience at Seoul American.

Kubasaki Dragons
2017-18 record — 16-9 overall; Far East D-I runner-up.
Head coach — Johnny Cooper, second season.

Key performers — Atiria Simms, Jr.; G (All-Far East Division I); Megan Kirby, SG; F; Audrey Kene, Jr.; G; Urra Williams, Jr.; G; Ari Gieseck, Jr.; G.
Outlook — Rebuilding. For the first time in a long while, six seniors and two juniors from last year's team departed. Simms will be the force that drives this team as it grows and develops.

Kubasaki Dragons
2017-18 record — 3-15 overall; sixth at Far East D-I.
Head coach — Steven Casner, third season.

Key performers — Hailey Hansen, Sr.; F; Brandi Smith, Sr.; F; Megan Charkowski, Sr.; F; Audrey Kene, Jr.; G; Urra Williams, Jr.; G; Ari Gieseck, Jr.; G.
Outlook — Reloading. Eight players return from last season. Dragons hoping for leadership from Gieseck and should be stronger on the boards.

Kinnick Red Devils
2017-18 record — 19-10 overall; third in Far East D-I, fourth in combined Far East.
Head coach — Sherry Dailey, first season (coached the junior varsity the previous two seasons).
Key performers — Melissa Rose, Sr.; G; F; Cassi Boyer, Sr.; G; Jordan Simms, Jr.; G; Madelyn Gallo, Sr.; G (transferred from Rota, Spain).

Outlook — Rebuilding. Gallo should be a force in the middle, while youngster Simms can handle the ball and has a decent shot.

Division II
Daegu Warriors
2017-18 record — 8-12 overall, fourth in Far East D-II, sixth in combined Far East.
Head coach — Jonathan Van, first season.

Key performers — Bethani Newbold, So.; G (averaged 16 points, 3 steals, 3 assists per game last season); Dai'ja Rice, Sr.; G (17 points, 10 rebounds, 4 blocks); Katrina Vasquez, Jr.; Madelyn Huffman, So.

Outlook — Reloading. Sixth new coach in six seasons, but this is a team that broke into the win column last year after two winless seasons and looking for more with Newbold and Turner leading the way. Still, a young team, one junior and nine underclassmen; some growth still needed.

E.K. King Cobras
2017-18 record — 16-9 overall; fifth in Far East D-II, sixth in combined Far East.
Head coach — Yvonne Long, eighth season.

Key performers — Gabi Shultz, Jr.; G (All-Far East D-II); Allison Kiefer, So.; F.

Outlook — Continued rebuilding. Two good puzzle pieces remain in place, but lack of depth remains. Replacing two-time All-Far East guard Zanitta Boyd won't be easy.

Edgren Eagles
2017-18 record — 18-6 overall; Far East D-I runner-up.
Head coach — Sarah Richardson, 29th season.

Key performers — Momomi Atkinson, Sr.; SG; Shakyala Ray, So.; PG-F; Lydia Stone, Jr.; C-F.
Outlook — Atkinson will have to take the lead this season, but there's precious little around her. Only 13 players came out this season, and most of them have not reached their potential.

Perry Samurais
2017-18 record — 8-21 overall; sixth in DODEA Japan.
Head coach — Mike Cobb, first season (assisted last season).

Key performer — Taniya Smith, Jr.; G-F (8 points, 3 rebounds per game last season).
Outlook — Reloading. Just two players return from last season, only one of them, Smith, a starter. She'll be the team's backbone as the Samurai continue to grow and develop.

Ocean Cougars
2017-18 record — 9-12 overall; third in KAIAC Blue regular season.
Head coach — Brendan Rouse, first season.

Key performers — Elizabeth White, Sr.; G; Christina Hoff, Jr.; G; Maia Ithavai, Sr.; post; Allison Aston, Jr.; post; Jolissa Baran-Green, So.; F-C; Cassandra Brown, Jr.; G; Saloni Swayney, Sr.; F-C; Skye Cervantes, Sr.; G; Imani Pettigrew, Sr.; G.

Outlook — Reloading, perhaps contending in KAIAC Blue. A strong group of veteran returners, with Ithavai playing a key role in the team's success. Backcourt is equally strong with four-year vet White.

Seoul American Falcons
2017-18 record — 16-4 overall; fourth in Far East Division I tournament.
Head coach — Edward Rozzi, second season.

Key performers — Javyn Knight, So.; G; Tallen Hickey, So.; F; Lauren Kirschner, Jr.; F; Kylie Hart, So.; G; Tacia Hight, Sr.; C.

Outlook — Rebuilding. Just one player, Kirschner, returns from last year to a team in complete rebuild mode, with two key parts having transferred to Humphreys.

Yokota Panthers
2017-18 record — 26-5 overall; four-time defending Far East D-II champion.
Head coach — Byron Wrenn, second season.

Key performers — Emily Taynton, Jr.; G; Jalyah Bailey, Jr.; G; Hana Robbins, Jr.; G; Aika Arzanga, Jr.; G; Madison Derber, Sr.; Monique Wilson, Sr.

Outlook — Rebuilding, having lost all five starters. Talent is there; just needs time to develop and find the right mix.

Zama Trojans
2017-18 record — 11-12 overall; 10th in Far East D-II.
Head coach — Daisy Whitaker-Hayes, first season.

Key performers — Jessica Atkinson, Jr.; C; Emily Mason, Sr.; SG; Brianna Ratliff, Jr.; SG; Kiani Smith, Jr.; PG; Chloe Sterling, Jr.; PG.

Outlook — Rebuilding. A good core of experience and veterans, two freshmen who should shore up the backcourt. Not a great deal of depth, but with time to develop and find the right mix, this team could be competitive.

Girls basketball preview

Who can challenge ASB?

Beyond two-time champs, fields look wide open for D-I, II crowns

By DAVE ORNAUER
Stars and Stripes

Johnny Cooper knows what a good team needs to do to accomplish the feat. The question, he says, is there any team in Division I that can step up and take down American School of Bangkok, the two-time defending Far East large-schools girls champion?

It's doubtful that it will be Cooper and his rebuilding Kadena Panthers. For five of the past six years, including the last two, Kadena has played bridesmaid to powerhouse teams that made every Division I tournament since 2012 a chase to see who finishes second. Kadena did win once, in 2016.

For the last two years, ASB's Eagles, with their sister duo of Keisharna Lucas and two-time D-I MVP Shanique Lucas, have dominated all comers.

And it's a fairly sure bet that ASB will be invited back to defend its D-I title. Whether it's in one of the early pool-play games or if the Eagles make it to the championship game again, Cooper, the Panthers' second-year coach, offers the following:

"You have to limit your mistakes," he said. "They capitalize a great deal on turnovers. You really have to take care of the ball. And you have to bring the game to them. Last year, we did that for three quarters. But you have to play a complete game against them."

Cooper's Panthers should be hard-pressed to make it back to the title game, given that six se-



REBECCA HOLLADAY/Special to Stripes

Emily Taynton is one of four juniors returning to a Yokota team that has won the last four straight DODEA Japan and Far East Division II tournaments.

niors graduated and two juniors transferred. Only one starter, Atiria Simms, returns.

It could be that Kubasaki, long second-fiddle to the Panthers on Okinawa, could rise up. Eight players return from last year's team.

"This is by far the most talented team we've had top to bottom," said third-year Dragons coach Steven Casner. "They're going to give me everything they've got every day."

Or it could be Humphreys, which moves up from D-II and welcomes Steve Boyd to the coaching helm. He's coached boys teams at Seoul American and Edgren since 2002,

but never a girls team. He brings seniors Ebony Dykes and Maria Bruch with him from Seoul to Humphreys.

Kinnick also has a new coach, Sherry Dailey, who coached Red Devils junior varsity the past two years. Kinnick gains a 6-foot-2 center, Madelyn Gallo, from Rota, Spain, and a freshman guard in Jordan Simms.

And while Eagles might again sour to a D-I title, the small-schools title chase could be wide open, now that Yokota's super seniors, Britney and Jamie Bailey, have graduated.

Daegu, with new coach Jay Van, looks promising with super sophomores Bethani Newbold and Dai'ja Turner still in the lineup. So, too, does Ocean, with Brendan Rouse new to the helm but a veteran squad on the floor, featuring seniors Lizzy White and Maia Ithavai.

Yokota's cupboard isn't entirely bare; five players return, but second-year coach Byron Wrenn still needs height in the paint.

"We are working hard and excited about the season," Wrenn said. "We look forward to the start of the season and will compete with our opponents."

Among other teams in rebuild mode, Zama has four returners, including junior Jessica Atkinson in the middle.

"We don't have much depth," new coach Daisy Whitaker-Hayes said, "but we have quality and I'll take quality over quantity any day."

ornaueur.dave@stripes.com



MARY SARANTAKIS/Special to Stripes

Maria Bruch, left, formerly played for Seoul American, but is now a senior guard at Humphreys. Madelyn Huffman is a sophomore for up-and-coming Daegu's girls basketball team.

HEISMAN TROPHY FINALISTS

OKLAHOMA QB KYLER MURRAY

Two-sport star

Likely his final year playing football, A's signee will focus on baseball

By Cliff Brunt
Associated Press

Oklahoma's Kyler Murray pulled off an impressive triple play during a brutal 30-hour stretch in April.

On a Friday night, he played center field for the Sooners' baseball team. The next day, he played quarterback in the football team's spring game. After that, he played another baseball game Saturday night.

It was a mental and physical grind for Murray, but his dedication to both sports has paid off. Two

months later, the Oakland A's selected him in the first round of the Major League Baseball draft. He chose to continue playing football, and after posting one of the most impressive statistical seasons in FBS history, he was named a Heisman Trophy finalist on Monday.

Murray easily could have quit football after being drafted, but his reason for returning offers a window into his mentality. After a disappointing freshman season at Texas A&M in 2015, he transferred to Oklahoma. He sat out a year because of transfer rules, then waited last season behind Heisman winner Baker Mayfield. Murray's sudden rise in baseball left him facing the possibility that his last significant football memories would come from the rough year at Texas A&M.

He wasn't having it.

"I've been playing this game my whole life," he said. "To leave this game with a bad taste in my mouth after my freshman year at A&M is just not who I am. I've worked my whole life for this, and we're here. So for me, leaving after getting drafted was never an option. And they (the A's) knew that. They gave me the opportunity to do what I'm doing. I'm thankful."

"For the people that say I'm crazy for doing it (coming back), it's (quitting) just not who I am. I've played this game since I was 4 years old. I love this game, and I couldn't go out like that."

Instead, he goes out with a 205.7 passer efficiency rating, which would be an FBS record. He

has rushed for 892 yards to lead the fourth-ranked Sooners to a Big 12 title and a College Football Playoff meeting with Alabama.

None of Murray's success has surprised Tom Westerberg, his coach at Allen (Texas) High School who watched him go 43-0 and win three state titles. Even with the time off between his freshman year and this season, Westerberg thought Murray had the tools to pick up where he left off in high school, especially under Oklahoma coach Lincoln Riley's direction.

"I always thought he could do it," said Westerberg, who now coaches at Barbers Hill (Texas). "He's doing what he did in high school at the college level. Knowing him and his confidence, with the right situation with the right surrounding cast — and he is totally in the right place — when that gets around him, it's pretty dang good."

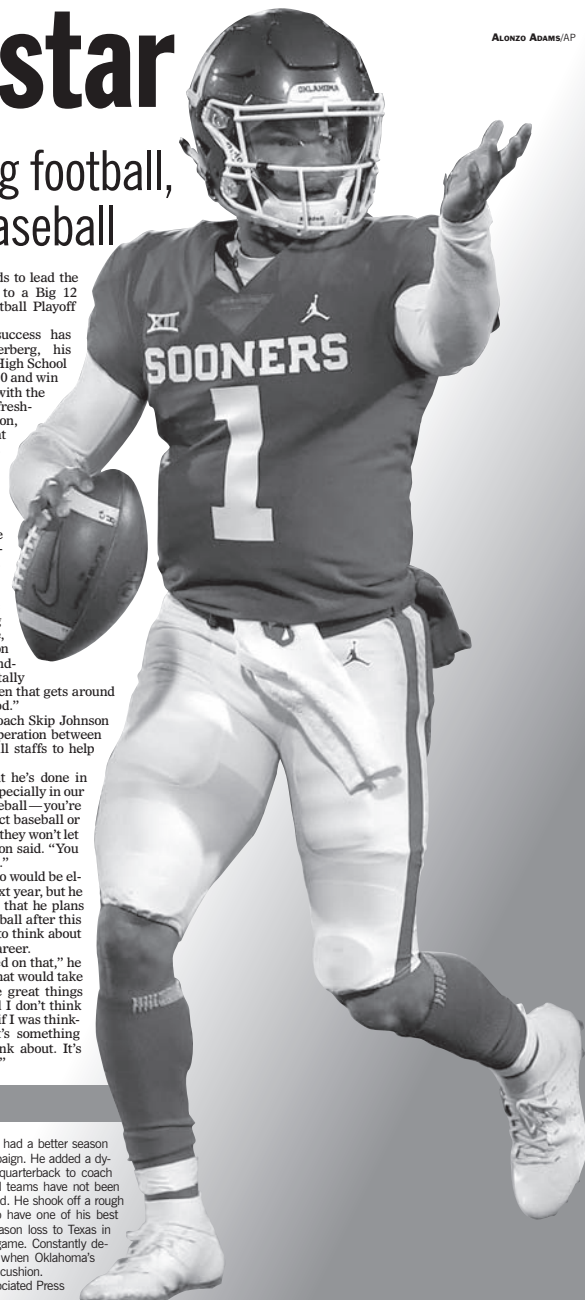
Oklahoma baseball coach Skip Johnson said it took a lot of cooperation between the football and baseball staffs to help Murray in both sports.

"It's pretty rare what he's done in football and baseball, especially in our world today of select baseball — you're either going to play select baseball or football, and in football, they won't let you do baseball," Johnson said. "You have to make the choice."

Murray is a junior who would be eligible to play football next year, but he has said multiple times that he plans to focus strictly on baseball after this season. He didn't want to think about the end of his football career.

"I'm not really focused on that," he said. "If I was, I think that would take away from some of the great things that are happening, and I don't think I'd be all in it right now if I was thinking about that stuff. It's something I obviously have to think about. It's coming up pretty quick."

ALONZO ADAMS/AP



FINALIST FACTS

WHO: Kyler Murray**YEAR/POSITION/SCHOOL:** Junior, QB, Oklahoma**BIO:** First-round Major League Baseball pick by the Oakland Athletics chose to return to campus and play football. Started his college football career at Texas A&M before transferring. Backed up Heisman winner Baker Mayfield last year.**KEY STATS:** Passed for 4,053 yards and 40 touchdowns with just seven interceptions; rushed for 892 yards and 11 scores. His 205.7 passer rating would be the best in FBS history.**THE SKINNY:** Actually had a better season

than Mayfield's senior campaign. He added a dynamic rushing element at quarterback to coach Lincoln Riley's offense, and teams have not been able to account for his speed. He shook off a rough start against Texas Tech to have one of his best games. Averaged regular-season loss to Texas in the Big 12 championship game. Constantly delivered in clutch situations when Oklahoma's defense couldn't give him a cushion.

— Associated Press

HEISMAN TROPHY FINALISTS

OHIO STATE QB DWAYNE HASKINS JR.

Worthy contender

Haskins says his numbers are deserving of Heisman

By MITCH STACY
Associated Press

It was subtle, but that definitely was the Heisman Trophy pose that Dwayne Haskins Jr. struck in the end zone after throwing his fifth touchdown pass of the Big Ten championship game last weekend.

It wasn't quite the hey-look-at-me, Desmond Howard version, but it was an unmistakable Heisman stiff-arm, high-leg stance, even if just for a second.

"I wasn't planning it," the Ohio State quarterback said. "I felt it was the right moment for me to do that. I tried to be low key with it, but that didn't work. It wasn't a full-on Heisman pose, but it's a cool picture to have one day."

Why not? The supremely confident Haskins put up Heisman-worthy numbers, broke records and led his team to a 12-1 mark in a tumultuous season that will end with a trip to the Rose Bowl — two spots outside the College Football Playoff. The other two finalists, quarterbacks Tua Tagovailoa of Alabama and Kyler Murray of Oklahoma, led their teams to playoff berths.

‘The quarterback’s dream is to sit back and pick a defense apart. ... We just had a whole bunch of fun this year.’

Dwayne Haskins Jr.
Ohio State QB

The prize will be awarded Saturday night.

Haskins finished with 4,580 passing yards and 47 touchdowns, both of which led the nation. He broke 11 Big Ten and Ohio State single-season records.

He's tied for 10th all-time for passing touchdowns in a single Big Ten offensive player of the year and MVP of the conference championship game.

After starting 12 games as a college quarterback, he'll likely enter the NFL draft, where he could be a first-round pick.

He remade the Ohio State offense in his own image, turning the Buckeyes into a pass-first team after four years of J.T. Barrett running for first downs. Then, late in the season, Haskins showed he could put his head down and run the ball effectively when he had to.

"The quarterback's dream is to sit back and pick a defense apart," Haskins said. "I gave coach (Urban) Meyer the confidence to do that. I gave coach (Ryan) Day and coach (Kevin) Wilson an opportunity to call great plays for me and execute them. We just had a whole bunch of fun this year."

The 21-year-old New Jersey native who played high school ball in Potomac, Md., is one of the best throwers ever to wear an Ohio State uniform. In the last two games of the season, against rival Michigan in the season finale and Northwestern in the conference championship game, Haskins threw for a combined 895 yards and 11 touchdowns.

"That's one of the best performances in the last two weeks in college football history," Meyer declared.

Haskins said he first heard of the Heisman Trophy playing the NCAA Football video game as a kid. He'd always choose to be No. 7, the Ohio State quarterback, and he'd win the bronze statuette every time.

"We'll see how realistic that is this week," he said.



MICHAEL CONROY/AP

FINALIST FACTS

WHO: Dwayne Haskins Jr.

YEAR/POSITION/SCHOOL: Sophomore, QB, Ohio State
BIO: After a redshirt year, the New Jersey native who played prep ball in Potomac, Md., waited his turn behind J.T. Barrett last year. His legend grew as he came in the 2017 Michigan game after a Barrett injury and led the Buckeyes to a come-from-behind victory. He became the undisputed starter last summer.

KEY STATS: Finished the regular season with 4,580 passing yards and 47 touchdowns, both of which led the nation. Broke 11 Big Ten and Ohio State single-season records. Tied for 10th all-time for passing touchdowns in a single season in NCAA history. Five games of 400 or more passing yards. Big Ten offensive player of the year and MVP of the conference championship game.

THE SKINNY: Put an exclamation point on his Heisman campaign in the Big Ten championship, passing for 499 yards and five touchdowns against Northwestern hours before ballots were due. The week before, he lit up archival and No. 4 Michigan for 396 yards and six touchdowns. The Rose Bowl on New Year's Day may be his last as a Buckeye before he declares for the NFL draft.

— Associated Press

COLLEGE FOOTBALL/MLB



JOE GROMELSKI/Stars and Stripes

Army quarterback Kelvin Hopkins Jr. carries the ball against Air Force at Michie Stadium in West Point, N.Y. Hopkins is the team's second-leading rusher with 783 yards, averaging 4.4 per carry, and has scored 10 touchdowns.

Attack: Black Knights keep grinding out the yards

FROM BACK PAGE

luncheon. "They knew what it took to become that player, so really everything they've done just came to fruition."

Guard Jaxson Deaton, a 6-foot-4, 310-pound junior, started three games last season: one at left guard, two at right guard. Senior tackle Austin Schuffert was on the field for one start. Those two and sophomore right guard Peyton Reeder played in a combined 31 games in 2017.

Monken gave credit to offensive line coach Brent Davis, who also is the Black Knights' offensive coordinator, for restoring an attack that averages 303 yards on the ground.

"He does a terrific job," Monken said. "He's a really good football coach. He's got a great temperament for that position. He coaches with tremendous detail, works those guys really hard, and he builds a toughness in that group that I think allows them to play the best they're capable of playing."

"That happens in college football. You can't sign them to new contracts. Eventually they graduate, so we had a cycle where we lost a bunch of them a year ago, but these guys stepped up. When you're part of a program that's won, there's a pride there that you don't want to see the thing go in the other direction."

Bradshaw finished with 3,038 career rushing yards before being succeeded at quarterback by Hopkins. After seeing action in six games in 2017, Hopkins is the team's second-leading rusher with 783 yards, averaging 4.4 per carry, and has scored 10 touchdowns. He also averages 20.3 yards on 44 completions in the Black Knights' limited passing game.



No. 22 Army (9-2) vs. Navy (3-9)

AFN-Sports

9 p.m. Saturday, CET

5 a.m. Sunday, JKT



Line: Army by 7.

Series record: Navy leads 60-51-7.

What's at stake: Bragging rights in the 119th meeting of the greatest rivalry in sports. Army will retain the Commander-in-Chief's Trophy with at least a tie. The Black Knights are trying to win for the third straight time in the series after losing the previous 14. Army is headed to the Armed Forces bowl but what is usually the biggest reward for a football is a mere footnote to beating Navy. The Black Knights have won seven straight games. Navy has defeated a ranked team 36 times in history, including three wins over Army.

Key matchup: Army is second nationally in yards rushing (303 per game) and converted 30 of 33 fourth down conversions. Darnell Woolfolk leads the Black Knights in rushing with 823 yards and Kelvin Hopkins Jr. has 783. Woolfolk has 14 touchdowns and Hopkins has 10 rushing TDs to give Army a potent 1-2 attack. Hopkins is the starting QB and has only thrown 81 passes with six passing TDs, which are dwarfed by his massive rushing totals.

Facts & figures: President Donald Trump will attend the game. It will be the 20th game in the series attended by a president. ... Navy is 10-1 in games at Lincoln Financial Field, home of the Super Bowl champion Eagles. ... Army enters the game ranked for the first time since 1996. ... Army has allowed just 106.5 yards rushing per game. ... Army has a two-game winning streak in the series for the first time since 1995-96.

— Associated Press

"Frankly, we didn't know what we were going to get with Kelvin," Monken said, "but what a tremendous job he's done, and what a pleasant surprise it's been to see him run the ball as effectively as he has because he really came to us as a guy that was a thrower in high school."

Senior fullback Darnell Woolfolk leads the Black Knights with 823 rushing yards and 14 touchdowns, and has 37 career TDs.

The offense is very efficient at keeping the football. Army leads the nation in time

of possession, averaging 39 minutes, 15 seconds. The team is No. 1 in third-down conversions at 57.1 percent and has converted an incredible 30 of 33 chances (90.9 percent) on fourth down, also tops in FBS.

It all starts with the rush, and Holland said the offensive line "takes a ton of pride" in its success.

"We believe that our success on offense starts with us," he said. "It's extremely important for us to do our job and impose our will because if we don't do that, we're not setting our teammates up for success."

Cards land D-backs 1B Goldschmidt

By BOB BAUM
Associated Press

PHOENIX — The St. Louis Cardinals struck gold in their search for a big hitter, acquiring slugging first baseman Paul Goldschmidt in a blockbuster trade with the Arizona Diamondbacks on Wednesday.

Eager to push for the playoffs after a three-year absence, St. Louis sent pitcher Luke Weaver, catcher Carson Kelly, minor league infielder Andy Young and a 2019 draft pick to Arizona.

A six-time All-Star and three-time Gold Glove winner at 31, Goldschmidt was among the top players available in the trade market. He hit .290 with 33 home runs and 83 RBIs last season.

"We've been busy this offseason working to upgrade our lineup, and today we are excited to announce the acquisition of one of the game's premier players," Cardinals

President of Baseball Operations John Mozeliak said in a statement.

Goldschmidt has a \$14.5 million salary next year, receives a \$1 million assignment bonus for the trade and will be eligible for free agency after next season. The Cardinals have a history of acquiring top hitters and then signing them to long-term deals, including Mark McGwire and Matt Holliday.

St. Louis went 88-74 last season and felt it needed a boost in the middle of a lineup that includes Matt Carpenter, Marcell Ozuna and Yadier Molina to compete with the likes of Milwaukee and the Chicago Cubs in the NL Central. The Cardinals' postseason drought is their longest since 1997-99.

Free-agent slugger Bryce Harper has supposedly been on the Cards' wish list, too, with the winter meetings coming up this weekend.

Arizona went 82-80 in the NL West and finished behind the Los Angeles Dodgers and Colorado, which both made the playoffs.

The Diamondbacks parted ways with a homegrown player who grew to be the face of the franchise but is nearing the end of an extremely team-friendly contract.

The quiet slugger was selected by Arizona in the eighth round of the 2009 draft and made his major league debut in 2011.

In 2013, Goldschmidt hit 36 home runs and drove in 125. In 2017, he matched that home-run high with 36 and drove in 120. He is a .297 career hitter with 209 home runs, and was runner-up in the NL MVP voting in 2013 and 2015.

"Certainly this is a bittersweet decision on our part," Diamondbacks general manager Mike Hazen said on a conference call. "I don't think I could overestimate the impact that Paul had on our team."

Hazen said the key to the deal was what the Cardinals offered in return. If there were no trade, the Diamondbacks faced the prospect of Goldschmidt as a free agent after next season.

Hazen said he understood fans' disappointment.

"Paul is possibly the best player in the National League," Hazen said. "We understand that. We've understood that for a long time."



Goldschmidt

NFL

Ravens need Jackson to keep Chiefs off field

By TODD KARPOVICH
Associated Press

OWINGS MILLS, Md. — Since taking over as the starting quarterback, rookie Lamar Jackson has revitalized the Baltimore Ravens' running attack and kept opposing offenses off the field by dominating time of possession.

He will need to do that again this week to slow down the high-flying Kansas City Chiefs, who lead the NFL with 37 points per game.

"It will be very helpful if we could do that," Ravens coach John Harbaugh said. "They score in a variety of ways very quickly so time of possession would be very helpful for us."

Jackson has emerged as a playmaker in place of Joe Flacco, who has been sidelined with a hip injury since Nov. 4. Flacco was not expected to be a full participant in practice on Wednesday, but Harbaugh said Flacco's activity will be "ramped up" later this week.

Until then, Jackson is poised to make his fourth consecutive start. He has led Baltimore to three consecutive victories, but faces his biggest challenge this week in a raucous Arrowhead Stadium.

"I just feel like those guys are going to have to read my lips sometimes," Jackson said about adjusting to the crowd noise. "I heard Kansas City can be very loud. I'm going to have to do my job and speak up."

Chiefs coach Andy Reid has been impressed by the young quarterback. Jackson will look to make plays against a Kansas City defense that is allowing 122 yards rushing per game.

"He can run like a running back. He's as fast as a receiver and he can throw like a son of a gun. That's a good combination of



NICK WASS/AP

Since taking over as the starting quarterback, rookie Lamar Jackson has revitalized the Ravens running attack and kept opposing offenses off the field by dominating time of possession. He will need to do that again this week to help slow down Kansas City, which leads the NFL with 37 points per game.

have," Reid said.

The Ravens have run for more than 200 yards in each of the last three games and hold the sixth and final postseason spot in the AFC. Baltimore (7-5) also is within a half-game of the first-place Pittsburgh Steelers in the AFC North.

This upcoming game features the Ravens' top-ranked defense against the Chiefs' No. 1 offense. The players, however, are just focused on winning and not any statistics.

"We're a confident group and we feel that we can match up with anyone," Ravens safety Eric Wed-

die said. "With our scheme and the players we have, we should be able to go out and play great defense. Obviously, this offense is the best in the league. It's going to be a challenge for us, but we're up for it. We're excited to go into a playoff-style game."

In Week 13, Baltimore held the ball for 39:39, compared to just 20:21 for Atlanta. The Falcons ran just 13 plays in the second half.

That dominance helped the Ravens' defense stay fresh and make big plays, especially in the fourth quarter. Atlanta quarterback Matt Ryan threw for the fewest passing yards (131) in a

game he played from beginning to end over his 11-year career.

The Ravens left Atlanta with a 26-16 victory.

Baltimore faces a tougher test this week against Kansas City (10-2) and quarterback Patrick Mahomes, who has thrown for 3,923 yards with 41 touchdowns and 10 interceptions. Mahomes has several key weapons at his disposal, including receiver Tyreek Hill (1,119 yards, 11 touchdowns) and tight end Travis Kelce (1,082 yards and nine TDs).

Harbaugh and his players are looking forward to the opportunity to play against the best team

By the numbers

37

The number of points per game the Kansas City Chiefs' league-leading offense is averaging this season.

17.8

Number of points the Ravens' league-leading defense is allowing this season.

265

Number of yards Ravens quarterback Lamar Jackson has rushed for in his past three games.

SOURCE: NFL.com

in the AFC.

"Kansas City is very loud. It's a great environment," Harbaugh said. "It's one of those environments you love going into in this league. It's what you do this job for. Yes, it's an awesome place to play. It'll be loud, they'll be into it (if) their team is winning. This will be a big game. We're looking forward to that. That's something that you really kind of relish."

Patriots defense coming into its own

By KYLE HIGHTOWER
Associated Press

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. — For each of the past two seasons, the identity of the Patriots defense didn't become clear until late in the year.

Both times the group had stumbles early, followed by steady improvement. Those leaps were aided at least in part by the increased contributions of newcomers or role players that previously had much smaller roles.

That pattern is holding true in 2018 as the Patriots prepare for back-to-back road games at Miami and Pittsburgh that will go a long way in determining their playoff seeding.

Earlier this season, New England's opponents took advantage of a defense that struggled to get pressure up front and that was susceptible to giving up big plays in the secondary.

After allowing 300 or more passing yards four times in its first seven games, New England (9-3) has not allowed a 300-yard passer in five straight games. It also has not allowed a 100-yard rusher in nine straight games, going back to Week 3 against the Lions when Kerryon Johnson did it.

Those are important markers for a Patriots defense that has had trouble recently at Miami. New England is 17-7 against the Dolphins since 2007, but has lost four of its past five at Hard Rock Stadium.

Ryan Tannehill threw for 350 yards and two TDs

in the Dolphins' 20-10 win in the 2015 regular-season finale in Miami.

That came a season after Knowshon Moreno rushed for 134 yards and a touchdown in Miami's 33-20 win to open the 2014 season. Tannehill had two touchdown passes in that game to help the Dolphins outscore the Patriots 23-0 in the second half.

"It's a week-to-week challenge in the season," Patriots coach Bill Belichick said of his defense's evolving identity. "We haven't established anything against Miami, so we'll have to go down and do that on Sunday and we'll see what happens. Certainly, they'll be a big challenge for us."

Since allowing a season-high 40 points in their win over Kansas City in Week 6, only two teams have scored more than 17 against the Patriots over the past six games — Chicago (38-31 win over the Bears) and Tennessee (34-10 loss to the Titans).

One reason the Patriots defense has tightened has been the improvement of the secondary. That has included key contributions from rookie cornerback J.C. Jackson, who has seen an increased role since Eric Rowe was placed on injured reserve at the end of October.

Jackson has two interceptions and contributed to another in last week's win over Minnesota, tipping Kirk Cousins' pass into the hands of teammate Duron Harmon in the closing minutes.



STEVEN SENNE/AP

New England Patriots defensive back J.C. Jackson, right, breaks up a pass intended for Minnesota Vikings wide receiver Aldrick Robinson during a game Dec. 2 in Foxborough, Mass.

NFL

Eagles in control of their playoff destiny

By ROB MAADDI
Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — It took the Philadelphia Eagles 13 weeks to win consecutive games and they have to keep doing it to reach the playoffs.

At least the defending Super Bowl champions control their fate.

If they win out, they'll secure the NFC East. But Philadelphia has the league's toughest schedule in the final quarter of the season.

A first-place showdown at Dallas (7-5) is up next followed by a trip west to face the Los Angeles Rams (11-1). The Houston Texans (9-5) visit Philadelphia on Dec. 23 and the Eagles finish the season at Washington (6-6).

"We have our work cut out for us for sure," Carson Wentz said following Monday night's 28-13 win over the Redskins.

After an embarrassing 48-7 loss at New Orleans two weeks ago — the most lopsided defeat by a defending Super Bowl champion in NFL history — the Eagles seemed to be in trouble. They had a slew of injuries and easily could've used excuses to pack it in for this season.

Instead, they rebounded with back-to-back wins for the first time since Nick Foles led them in the playoffs last season.

"Obviously, we didn't start the way we thought we were going to, but I think this really speaks to the overall resiliency of this football team, the character of the guys in the locker room," tight end Zach Ertz said.

"At 4-6, when we got drilled by the Saints a few weeks back, everyone had the opportunity to kind of put their heads down and sulk. But guys in that locker room really love the game of football. I think guys really love their craft. And I mean we went

to work. Obviously, 6-6 now, not where we thought we were going to be, but at the same time we have the whole season in front of us."

The offense has been more productive the past two games and, not coincidentally, it's been more balanced.

Undrafted rookie Josh Adams has 42 carries for 169 yards and one touchdown in two games since taking over as the lead back. Darren Sproles returned Monday night for the first time since Week 1 and provided a big spark, scoring on a 14-yard TD.

"You have to run the ball. You have to have that balance," coach Doug Pederson said Tuesday. "We had it the last two weeks. It's been positive. It opens up a little bit more in the play-action world and getting the quarterback out on the perimeter, getting Carson on the edge and where he's been good at seeing the field. It goes back to the offensive line, how well are they controlling the line of scrimmage and starting there, and we started fast last night and that's a positive in the big scheme of things."

Golden Tate had his best game since the Eagles acquired him from Detroit in October. He caught seven passes for 85 yards and one TD and hauled in a 2-point conversion. Tate's arrival had set other receivers back as Philadelphia tried to integrate a new player midseason.

But Wentz spread the ball around against the Redskins. Nelson Agholor had four catches for 56 yards, Alshon Jeffery had three for 31, Jordan Matthews' only catch was a 4-yard TD and Ertz caught nine for 83.

"I just wanted to be available when my time came and I wanted to help this team win and win a lot," Tate said. "A lot of guys caught passes and when it's like that, it's always good."



MATT ROURKE/AP

The Eagles' Josh Adams in action during the second half Sunday against the Redskins. Adams had 42 carries for 169 yards and a touchdown in the last two games.

Seattle's winning streak fuels push for postseason

By TIM BOOTH
Associated Press

RENTON, Wash. — After four straight weeks of playing tight, one-score games decided in the fourth quarter, Pete Carroll enjoyed spending a Monday reviewing a rare comfortable victory.

"It was a little different than the games we've been playing in," Carroll said. "It was nice to see us get out ahead and hang onto it and work with the lead and play in that fashion."

Seattle's blowout win over San Francisco on Sunday only strengthened what is becoming another late playoff push by the Seahawks, and after a day in which they got results that helped in trying to get back to the playoffs after missing last season. Seattle is currently in command of one of the wild-card spots in the NFC and its hopes were strengthened by Carolina and Minnesota suffering losses. Seattle holds the tiebreaker over Carolina and can have that in place over Minnesota with a win at home next Monday night against the Vikings.

The only teams Seattle (7-5) could end up in wild-card contention with that it won't face head-to-head are Washington and Philadelphia. But if the Seahawks continue winning, it won't matter.



ELAINE THOMPSON/AP

Seahawks wide receiver Jaron Brown, center, celebrates with wide receiver David Moore, left, and offensive tackle Duane Brown, right, after catching a pass for a touchdown Sunday against the 49ers.

They'll be in the postseason.

"These are must-win games for us. Every week, we approach it like that," Seattle left tackle Duane Brown said after the win.

"We approach every week like a playoff game and that's the kind of intensity guys came out with from kickoff on."

Seattle's current roll is reviving

memories of 2015, when it was 4-5 after nine games. But this time, success is coming a different way. That season, the Seahawks leaned on the passing arm of quarterback Russell Wilson as he threw for 24 touchdowns and just one interception over the final seven games as Seattle went 6-1 down the stretch and made the postseason. Wilson averaged 272 yards passing and 31 pass attempts per game during that stretch.

So far, it's been balance and efficiency that's defined Seattle's offensive performance during its current three-game win streak, although his overall numbers aren't that dissimilar. Wilson has eight touchdown passes and no interceptions during the stretch, averaging about 250 yards passing. But there's been no fall-off with Seattle's run game of late, meaning Wilson isn't being forced to carry the offense.

In Sunday's 43-16 win over San Francisco, Wilson attempted just six passes in the first half. He threw for touchdowns on three of them. Seattle will take that kind of efficiency — even with reduced numbers — all the time.

"I think that the development of the pass protection has been really obvious and Russ has taken advantage of that," Carroll said, noting Wilson's movement on a

52-yard TD pass to Tyler Lockett on Sunday. "That's why he's been able to be more effective getting the second looks and sliding up in the pocket and hitting Tyler on the big play was a perfect example of that. Really good protection, he gets to move to give one more beat to get Tyler a chance to get behind him and deliver the throw. I just think it's connected with what's going on up front, but his overall command of what we're trying to get done communication-wise has really helped the other guys play well."

Seattle did come out of the win over the 49ers with one major injury concern after guard D.J. Fluker suffered a hamstring strain. Carroll said Fluker had a "grade 1" strain and would likely miss a couple of weeks. When Fluker was unable to play last month against the Rams, it was Jordan Simmons who stepped in to start.

"He seems to be moving in the right direction to be a really, really viable option for us," Carroll said of Simmons. "He doesn't get that much practice time, so when he does get the practice time like he did in the Rams week, he did a very good job with it. So, we're going to count on him playing and see how that goes."



GAMEDAY

WEEK 14

TELEVISED GAMES



Baltimore Ravens (7-5)
at **Kansas City Chiefs (10-2)**

AFN-Sports2
7 p.m. Sunday CET
3 a.m. Monday JKT

Series: Chiefs lead 4-3.

Last meeting: Chiefs beat Ravens 34-14, Dec. 20, 2015.

Notes: Ravens have won three of past four meetings. ... Chiefs coach Andy Reid is 3-1 all-time against Ravens. ... Ravens rookie QB Lamar Jackson passed for 125 yards and rushed for 75 in Week 13. ... Chiefs QB Patrick Mahomes passed for 295 yards and four TDs last week, and rushed for 52 yards.



Indianapolis Colts (6-6)
at **Dallas Cowboys (7-5)**

AFN-Atlantic
7 p.m. Sunday CET
3 a.m. Monday JKT

Series: Colts lead 25-8.

Last meeting: Texans beat Colts 37-34 in OT, Sept. 30, 2018.

Notes: Colts have won two of past three meetings. ... Texans are on nine-game winning streak after opening season with three straight losses. ... Colts QB Andrew Luck has 21 TD passes in nine career games against Houston. ... Texans RB Lamar Miller rushed for 103 yards last week.

Marquee matchup

Los Angeles Rams (11-1) at Chicago Bears (8-4)

AFN-Sports, 2 a.m. Monday CET; 10 a.m. Monday JKT

SERIES RECORD: 53-36-3.

LAST MEETING: Bears beat Rams 37-13, Nov. 15, 2015.

LAST WEEK: Rams beat Lions 30-16; Bears lost to Giants 30-27, OT.

RAMS OFFENSE: OVERALL (2), RUSH (4), PASS (4).

RAMS DEFENSE: OVERALL (18), RUSH (18), PASS (17).

BEARS OFFENSE: OVERALL (20), RUSH (16), PASS (19).

BEARS DEFENSE: OVERALL (4), RUSH (2), PASS (11).

STREAKS, STATS AND NOTES: Rams clinched second straight NFC West title, became first team to secure playoff spot, with win over Detroit. Los Angeles hadn't won back-back division championships since completing

run of seven straight in 1979. ... Beating Bears would give Rams first-round bye. ... Rams lead New Orleans by one game for home-field advantage throughout NFC playoffs. Los Angeles lost at New Orleans on Nov. 4. ... QB Jared Goff ranks fourth in NFL with 3,754 yards passing, sixth with 27 touchdowns. ... RB Todd Gurley leads NFL in both yards rushing (1,175), yards from scrimmage (1,649). ... NFC North-leading Bears won five straight before wild loss to Giants. Chicago rallied from 10 down in final 1:13 of regulation, losing when Janoris Jenkins knocked away deep pass by Chase Daniel after Aldrick Rosas kicked 44-yard field goal. ... Chicago's defense leads NFL with 21 interceptions. ... QB Mitchell Trubisky expects to start after missing past two games because of right shoulder injury. ... RB Tarik Cohen set career highs last week in receptions (12), yards receiving (156), yards from scrimmage (186).

— Associated Press



Rams RB Todd Gurley
KELVIN MAZUR/AP

Game capsules compiled from nflmedia.com

Also on AFN:

Denver Broncos (6-6) at **San Francisco 49ers (2-10)**, AFN-Atlantic, 10 p.m. Sunday CET; 6 a.m. Monday JKT
Cincinnati Bengals (6-7) at **Los Angeles Chargers (9-3)**, AFN-Sports2, 10 p.m. Sunday CET; 6 a.m. Monday JKT

EXPANDED STANDINGS

American Conference

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Home	Away	AFC	NFC	Div
New England	9	3	0	.750	331	259	6-0-0	3-3-0	6-2-0	3-1-0	3-0-0
Miami	6	6	0	.500	244	300	5-1-0	1-5-0	5-4-0	1-2-0	3-1-0
Buffalo	4	8	0	.333	178	293	2-3-0	2-5-0	3-6-0	1-2-0	1-2-0
N.Y. Jets	3	9	0	.250	243	307	2-4-0	1-5-0	2-7-0	1-2-0	0-4-0
South											
Houston	9	3	0	.750	302	235	5-1-0	4-2-0	7-2-0	2-1-0	3-1-0
Indianapolis	6	6	0	.500	325	279	4-2-0	2-4-0	5-0-0	1-1-0	2-2-0
Tennessee	6	6	0	.500	221	245	4-1-0	2-5-0	4-6-0	2-0-0	2-2-0
Jacksonville	4	8	0	.333	203	243	3-4-0	1-4-0	3-6-0	1-2-0	1-3-0
North											
Pittsburgh	7	4	1	.625	346	282	3-3-0	4-1-1	4-4-1	3-0-0	3-1-0
Baltimore	7	5	0	.583	297	214	4-2-0	3-3-0	6-3-0	1-2-0	2-3-0
Cleveland	6	6	0	.500	286	371	3-4-0	2-3-0	3-5-0	2-2-0	1-3-0
Cleveland	4	7	1	.375	266	312	3-2-1	1-5-0	3-5-1	1-2-0	2-1-0
West											
Kansas City	10	2	0	.833	444	327	5-0-0	5-2-0	8-1-0	2-1-0	4-0-0
L.A. Chargers	9	3	0	.750	340	249	4-2-0	5-1-0	6-2-0	3-1-0	4-0-0
Denver	6	6	0	.500	276	262	3-3-0	3-3-0	4-5-0	2-1-0	2-2-0
Oakland	2	10	0	.167	220	367	1-5-0	1-5-0	1-7-0	1-3-0	0-4-0

y-cinched division

National Conference

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Home	Away	NFC	AFC	Div
Dallas	7	5	0	.583	247	223	5-1-0	2-4-0	6-3-0	1-2-0	3-1-0
Philadelphia	6	6	0	.500	258	266	4-3-0	2-3-0	4-5-0	2-1-0	3-1-0
Washington	6	6	0	.500	233	257	3-3-0	3-3-0	4-4-0	0-2-0	2-2-0
N.Y. Giants	4	8	0	.333	267	315	2-4-0	2-4-0	3-7-0	1-1-0	0-4-0
South											
New Orleans	10	2	0	.833	419	269	5-1-0	5-1-0	7-2-0	3-0-0	2-1-0
Carolina	6	6	0	.500	304	306	5-1-0	1-5-0	4-5-0	2-1-0	1-2-0
Tampa Bay	5	7	0	.417	318	355	4-2-0	1-5-0	4-5-0	1-2-0	2-2-0
Atlanta	4	8	0	.333	296	333	3-4-0	1-4-0	4-4-0	0-4-0	2-2-0
North											
Chicago	8	4	0	.667	344	241	5-1-0	3-3-0	6-2-0	2-2-0	3-1-0
Minnesota	6	5	1	.542	275	270	4-2-0	2-3-1	5-3-1	1-2-0	2-1-1
Green Bay	4	7	1	.375	281	287	4-1-1	0-6-0	2-6-1	2-1-0	1-2-1
Detroit	4	8	0	.333	254	316	3-4-0	1-4-0	2-7-0	2-1-0	1-3-0
West											
y-L.A. Rams	11	1	0	.917	419	298	6-0-0	5-1-0	7-1-0	4-0-0	4-0-0
Seattle	7	5	0	.583	319	259	3-2-0	4-3-0	6-3-0	1-2-0	2-2-0
Arizona	3	9	0	.250	175	310	1-5-0	2-4-0	3-5-0	0-4-0	2-2-0
San Francisco	2	10	0	.167	255	336	2-3-0	0-7-0	1-8-0	1-2-0	0-4-0



New Orleans Saints (10-2)
at **Tampa Bay Buccaneers (5-7)**

AFN-Sports
7 p.m. Sunday CET
3 a.m. Monday JKT

Series: Saints lead 32-21.

Last meeting: Buccaneers beat Saints 48-40, Sept. 9, 2018.

Notes: Buccaneers have won past two meetings. ... Saints QB Drew Brees leads NFL in completion percentage (75.5) and rating (123.2). ... Saints RB Alvin Kamara has rushed for 742 yards this season. ... Buccaneers QB Jameis Winston passed for 249 yards and two TDs last week.



Philadelphia Eagles (6-6)
at **Dallas Cowboys (7-5)**

AFN-Sports
6:25 p.m. Sunday CET
10:25 a.m. Monday JKT

Series: Cowboys lead 64-51.

Last meeting: Cowboys beat Eagles 27-20, Nov. 11, 2018.

Notes: Cowboys have won past two meetings. ... Eagles coach Doug Pederson is 2-3 all-time against Cowboys. ... Eagles QB Carson Wentz passed for 306 yards and two TDs last week. ... Cowboys RB Ezekiel Elliott ranks second in NFL with 1,150 rushing yards and 1,573 scrimmage yards.

REST OF THE SCHEDULE

N.Y. Giants at Washington
at Green Bay
N.Y. Jets at Buffalo
Carolina at Cleveland
New England at Miami
Detroit at Arizona
Pittsburgh at Oakland
Monday's game
Minnesota at Seattle

NEXT WEEK

Thursday, Dec. 13
L.A. Chargers at Kansas City
Saturday, Dec. 15
Houston at N.Y. Jets
Cincinnati at Baltimore
Sunday, Dec. 16
Tennessee at N.Y. Giants
Green Bay at Chicago
Detroit at Buffalo
Tampa Bay at Baltimore
Arizona at Atlanta
Oakland at Cincinnati
Dallas at Indianapolis
Miami at Minnesota
Washington at Jacksonville
Seattle at San Francisco
New England at Pittsburgh
Philadelphia at L.A. Rams
Monday, Dec. 17
New Orleans at Carolina

SPORTS



Ball control

Ravens, Jackson will need to keep high-octane Chiefs off field » **Page 61**

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Rumbling on

Graduations did little to slow Army's dominant triple-option attack

By JOE JULIANO
Philly.com

ARMYPHILADELPHIA
Army head coach Jeff Monken had some major rebuilding to do with his team's triple-option offense after the 2017 season, needing to replace four starters along the offensive line and quarterback Ahmad Bradshaw, a group that sparked a Black Knights rushing attack that led the nation.

The changeover was virtually seamless. Army might have "slipped" from No. 1 in FBS to No. 2 in rushing offense, but it has continued its run of success with four new starting linemen and a new quarterback in junior Kelvin Hopkins Jr., carrying a 9-2 record and a No. 22 ranking into Saturday's contest with Navy at Lincoln Financial Field.

'When you're part of a program that's won, there's a pride there that you don't want to see the thing go in the other direction.'

Jeff Monken
Army head coach

The only returning starter on the line, senior center Bryce Holland, was joined by two players to his left who had combined for three career starts before this season. The two players to his right had yet to start a game, and sophomore tackle J.B. Hunter hadn't seen any game action whatsoever.

"Those guys are guys that came out every single day and expected to work hard and expected to play," Holland, one of the Army captains, said last week at the Army-Navy

SEE ATTACK ON PAGE 60

Army FB Darnell Woolfolk breaks through the Air Force defense at Michie Stadium in West Point, N.Y., in November.

JOE GROMELSKI/Stars and Stripes

Inside:

■ Oklahoma QB Murray has justified decision to return to school, **Page 58**

D-I champ Kinnick will face stiff challenge » **Page 56**

